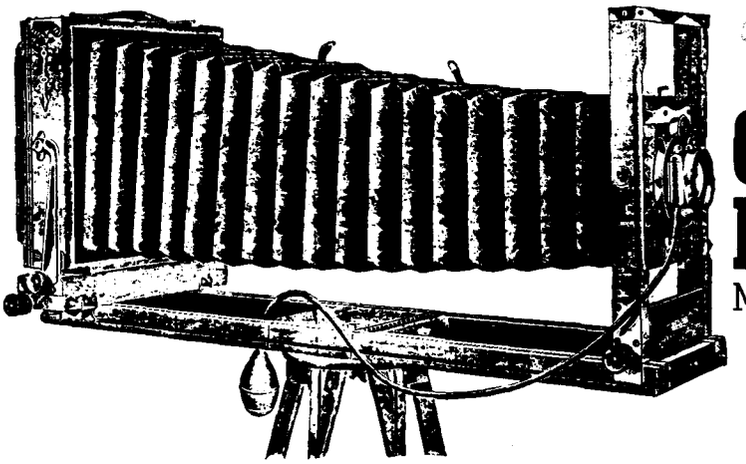
Volume XCIX No. 10 December 7, 1973 50 cents

commonweal



CENSORSHIP OR PORNOGRAPHY?
MARK TAYLOR

THE WAYWARD PRESSMEN
SISYPHUS

TRUTH AND BRITISH TELEVISION
BRIAN WICKER

SAD DAYS IN RECIFE
A BRAZILIAN PRIEST

QUESTIONS, ODDITIES
MICHAEL NOVAK

B MINUS
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

CRITICS' CHOICES FOR CHRISTMAS
CLAIRE HAHN
EUGENE C. KENNEDY
WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS
JAMES M. MELLARD
RAYMOND A. SCHROTH
RICHARD C. WADE
GERALD WEALES
MARGARET WIMSATT

E. E. CUMMINGS
JOHN FANDEL

ST CHARLES SEM LIB
CARTHAGENA STA
CELINA OH 45822
M-12097 12-74

Fiftieth Anniversary Year
1973-1974

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Five books to help you on your journey through Marriage and the Family

FUN AND GAMES IN MARRIAGE
— by Dorothy T. Samuel
Here is a book guaranteed to add life and zest to any marriage. FUN AND GAMES IN MARRIAGE is a priceless collection of "little ways" in which love can be kept alive and growing. You will find this fresh approach a pleasant change to the clap-trap, hollow cynicism that too often fills contemporary books on marriage. This is a book to be read and re-read, to be kept as a personal refresher and given away as a practical guide to making marriage fun. **Hardbound $2.95**

CREATIVE PARENTHOOD — by Frank Cheavens
What can you do that will help your child develop to his maximum potential? In CREATIVE PARENTHOOD Dr. Cheavens discusses the advantages parents can give their children. Chapters discuss beginning to learn at an early age, television, movies, comic books, well-balanced sex education, mental health as a result of vital religious faith. **Hardbound $4.95**

LEARNING TO LOVE
— by Lewis P. Bird and Christopher T. Reilly
Where do teenagers get answers to the important questions that will shape their future attitudes toward love and sex? A theologian and a doctor think the church is the ideal place to find answers. This book combines biological facts with ethical values in an honest, factual and sensitive approach to helping puzzled parents and troubled teenagers find solutions to their problems. A versatile resource book suitable for general church use, LEARNING TO LOVE includes numerous statistical studies and three separate suggested courses of sex study for junior high students, senior high students and parents. **Hardbound $4.95**

PROMISES TO PETER — by Charlie W. Shedd
Father and son. A relationship as old as humanity itself. But what kind should it be? Close and affectionate; distant and stern? Charlie Shedd has some ideas on the subject. When his son was born he wrote out a set of promises about rearing him. What they were and how Charlie kept them are all contained in this valuable book. PROMISES TO PETER can help reduce the generation gap to an insignificant crack! **Hardbound $3.95**

CONVERSATIONS ON LOVE AND SEX IN MARRIAGE
— by Jim and June Cicero, Ivan and Joyce Fahs
Here is an intimate dialogue on the Christian perspective of marriage by two young married couples.

In the actual conversations recorded in this timely book, these two committed couples vividly express their confusion and rebellion at the apparent discrepancies between their own sexual experience in Christian marriage and what the Church seems to be teaching them.

This is not the typical book on sexual harmony in marriage with superficial questions and carefully worded responses. It is a spontaneous exchange, sprinkled with differences of opinion and coupled with spiritually liberating views on how each person can be more fulfilled with his spouse and himself in the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of a marital relationship centered in Christ. **Hardbound $3.50**

Available now at your favorite bookstore.

WORD books

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bells, Bows, and Books, Books, Books

For Goodness' Sake!
Humor, warmth, and candor fill this delightful book. In a firsthand look behind the parsonage door, Edith Patterson Meyer describes what it was like to be the youngest child in a New England minister's large family at the turn of the century. $4.95

It's Your Day
Wil Shorb, musician and member of a singing trio, shares his thoughts and experiences as a Spirit-filled Christian. He shows the reader how to successfully confront and overcome the 4-F's in life—failures, fatigue, feelings and so-called freedoms. $2.95

Tell Me Again, I'm Listening
Do you have trouble communicating with your spouse? In this frank appraisal of what it means to have a real dialogue with your marriage partner, you will find helpful and practical advice. Richard Wilke and wife Julia speak from experience in this easy-to-read book. $3.95

The Joyful Wedding
Make your wedding a very personal expression of your love. Here are innovative ideas and sixteen original songs for that very special wedding—yours! Everything from clothes and decorations to vows, music, Scripture, and the surrounding mood. Nick Hodsdon. Paper, $3.50

Plum Jelly and Stained Glass & Other Prayers
Color of joy in a glass of jelly, green seeds on an elm tree, mosquitoes, motorcycles, lonely people . . . Jo Carr and Imogene Sorley pray about various and sundry things in their own inimitable, honest, and down-to-earth manner. $2.75

Reflections of a Fishing Parson
A cane pole, a river bank, and something more—time to think and enjoy solitude. Jonathan Sams shares fish tales and his own personal philosophy in an appealing narrative. Nostalgic reading for fishing buffs of all ages. Illus. $2.95

Armed with Love: Stories of the Disciples
Gerald N. Battle. In twelve new and exciting stories, the disciples step from the pages of history. Armed with love and their new message, eleven of them became towers of strength as they shared the Good News. Ages 12-up. $4.95

Bible Stories: God at Work with Man
Mary Alice Jones; illustrated by Tom Armstrong. A beloved children's author shows how God has always chosen people to be his partners in his work for good everywhere. Accounts of Abraham, Moses, Amos, Dorcas, and many others. Ages 6-9. $3.95

Indians of the Southeast: Then and Now
Beautiful drawings, photographs, famous Indian art, and fascinating text relate the story of the Southeastern tribes—their history, life-styles, legends, triumphs, and defeats. Jesse Burt and Robert B. Ferguson. All ages. $7.95

The Aminal
Written and illustrated by Lorna Balian. Patrick finds a strange aminal and puts it in his lunch sack. As his friends learn about the aminal, it grows fiercer, uglier, and hungrier. Gossip is presented in a humorous and appealing manner. Ages 4-7. $3.95

Follow the Butterfly Stream
Written and illustrated with full-color photographs by Lorenz Boyd. The vast beauty of the Smokies is captured in this refreshing trek along mountain trails, by sparkling streams, to the meadow of the butterflies. An appealing book for all ages. $3.50

The Trees of Christmas
An unusual combination of creativity and beauty—23 breathtaking photographs of decorated trees in full color, plus complete instructions for making the decorations. Over 200 black-and-white illustrations. A treasured gift. Boxed for your convenience. $7.95

Young Readers Book of Bible Stories
Helen Doss; illus. by Tom Armstrong. 137 stories as real as today's headlines make Bible characters and their surroundings come to life. Scene-setting introductions to each testament and section, maps, pronunciation guide, index. Ages 8-12. $7.95

Young Readers Bible*
A proven classic based on the Revised Standard Version Bible. Features over 600 2-color illustrations, bold-face subject headings outlining the text, full-color reference maps, a chronological chart, and durable binding. Enjoyable for all ages. $8.95

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
An authoritative Bible reference by 253 skilled writers. Defines and explains every person, town, region, hill, stream, plant, animal, mineral, object, and major biblical doctrine in the Bible. Maps, illustrations. Four-volume set, $45

The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible
Including the Apocrypha, with General Articles. An all-new commentary based on lastest archaeological and technological information. Seventy contributors, full-color maps, indexes, photos. Based on RSV. Reg. edition, $17.50; thumb-indexed, $19.50

at your local bookstore
abingdon

*Published by A. J. Holman Co. Distributed exclusively by Abingdon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEWS & VIEWS

Death in the 'Family'

The terrible confirmation has come that Charles E. Horman, the American film maker who died under such mysterious circumstances during the Chilean coup d'état two months ago, is the same Charles Horman whose writings appeared in *Commonweal* from 1968-71.

Horman was introduced to *Commonweal* by Jonathan Eisen, a staffer here from 1967-69, and his bylines appeared on pieces about Berkeley and the media. He reviewed several books for Peter Steinfels, when Peter was running the back of the magazine.

Horman was in and out of the office on occasion in those days, and he was always welcome. The editors admired his work as that of an especially perceptive young man (he was only in his 20s at the time), and his company was enjoyed. Forever he was, as Anne Robertson put it, "a sweet guy."

When word was first published that a Charles E. Horman, American, 31, was arrested in his house in Santiago by the junta, and that his body was later found riddled with bullets, it did not seem possible that that Charles Horman, the victim of savagery, could be the same unprepossessing Charles Horman, free-lance writer and film-maker, whose work we were so happy to have in *Commonweal*. The coincidence just seemed too great. Alas, we were wrong. The Charles Horman who was killed was "our" Charles Horman. We feel his loss deeply.

The questions surrounding Charles' death are as multiple as the circumstances of the death itself are murky. His death could have been the result of apathy or of bureaucratic bumbling on the part of American officials in Chile. Or it could have been a calculated rub-out, possibly to conceal information of American involvement in the coup, which Horman had ostensibly come by during a chance visit to the port of Valparaiso on the eve of and during the coup.

Among other Americans whom Charles was reported to have encountered in Valparaiso was a retired American engineer, who had been at 15th Naval District headquarters in the Panama Canal Zone, and who was quoted as saying, "We came down to do the job and it's done."

The Horman family is dissatisfied with explanations that have come from Santiago and from Washington about Charles' death. And with good reason. The explanations are replete with discrepancies.

Nor do the Hormans propose, in their grief, to let the matter drop. Edmund C. Horman, Charles' father, hopes to lay out the family's suspicions (and grievances) to Congressional committees investigating the situation in Chile and prospective reinstatement of aid to that country. Mr. Horman merits that hearing.

"I'm not interested in revenge," Mr. Horman has declared. "What can revenge do? I don't want this to happen to an American citizen again."

Will Dick Resign?

I. F. Stone and Garry Wills provide the reasoning whereby it is unrealistic to expect Richard Nixon to resign.

Writing in the Nov. 29 *New York Review of Books*, Stone comments: "The biggest obstacle to Mr. Nixon's resignation may be his fear of going to jail. So long as he stays in the White House, he is safe. As President, he has the power to hamper investigation, drag out litigation, and block his own prosecution. . . . If—as seems clear—he wants to avoid trial of the issue, his best barricade is the White House fence. Once he is out of office, his position is not much better than that of Mitchell or Stans, Haldeman or Ehrlichman, or any other citizen."

Wills provided a related point of view in his Universal Press Syndicate column for Nov. 12. Calling for Nixon's resignation is to indulge in "wishful thinking," says Wills. He explains:

"If he resigns, he loses the shield of his office. How can he defy subpoenas of his papers then? Assume that he is innocent of any wrongdoing in all of the affairs being investigated—the tax matter, the use of funds on his homes, the Hughes donation, the ITT suit, the dairy rates, the Ellsberg break-in. It would still be embarrassing to produce material in each case, and to be called as a witness.

"Every lawyer thinking of his client's good would be bound to call on him—after all, John Mitchell's lawyer tried to subpoena tapes from him while he still held the Oval Office. Trial after trial would call him up in circumstances where he might look ignoble even if innocent."

Peter Green/LNS

Odds and Ends

—The *New York Times'* wedding profile of Princess Anne recalled a British journalist's backlash to American accusations of Anne's sulkiness: "Anne's sulking was better than Tricia Nixon's smiling."

—A telephone call was placed from *Commonweal* to the American Petroleum Institute in Washington, for the figures on projected Mid-East oil resources that appeared n our Nov. 30 editorial. The American Petroleum Institute kicked the caller between four extensions, then told him: "You'd better call the Chase Manhattan Bank, Energy Economics Division. 212-552-2222. That's where we get all our figures."

—The Navy had no estimate on how much fuel would be burned in flying 500 midshipmen from Annapolis to the Navy-Tulane football game in New Orleans. Air Force Academy officials, on the other hand, came forward about the gasoline that would be consumed transporting 270 Academy cadets, including the drum and bugle corps, to the Air Force-University of Arizona game in Tucson: 11,785 gallons. But the mission was essential, stressed Air Force Lieut. Gen. Daniel James, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. The sounds of the drum and bugle corps especially would make the Academy team "play harder," said James.

JOHN DEEDY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Doubtless Didymus

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: It made one count the years to read John Deedy's speculations [News & Views, Nov. 2] on W. H. Auden's use of the pen name, Didymus. We remember it well because it was our first acquaintance with the poet, who had yet to become famous. We asked a *Commonweal* editor friend of ours at the time who Didymus was. He replied that he was a non-Catholic who wanted (or the editors wanted?) at least subtly to indicate that fact. Now, Thomas the Apostle, our friend went on, was known as both Didymus, the twin, and of course as a doubter. Thus for Auden, Didymus, a doubter if not a twin. HARRY SCHWARTZ

New Haven, Conn.

To the Editors: The explanation of the pseudonym used by W. H. Auden in *Commonweal* in 1942 is almost certainly simpler than that offered in your issue of November 2.

By choosing Didymus—the Greek word for "twin" or, by extension, "double"—as his pen-name, Auden was challenging his more scholarly readers to recognize the author of a book published only a year earlier: *The Double Man.*

EDWARD MENDELSON
Literary Executor of the Estate of W. H. Auden

Stevens Point, Wisc.

To the Editors: Mark Taylor's explanation for Auden's pen-name of Didymus is indeed interesting [News & Views, Nov. 2]. I wonder if anyone has yet considered the possibility that Auden chose the name that Doubting Thomas was also known as:

> There was also one of the twelve, Thomas, who is also called Didymus, who was not with them when Jesus came. (John, XX, 24-25.)

RICHARD T. BRAY
Associate Professor of English
University of Wisconsin

NEWS & VIEWS: 252 **CORRESPONDENCE: 253**
EDITORIALS: 253
TRUTH ON TELEVISION: *Brian Wicker* **255**
SAD DAYS IN RECIFE: *A Brazilian Priest* **256**
WASHINGTON REPORT: The Wayward Pressmen: *Sisyphus* **258**
CENSORSHIP OR PORNOGRAPHY?: *Mark Taylor* **260**
E. E. CUMMINGS: *John Fandel* **264**
VERSE: *Sr. Mary Anthony Weinig, SHCJ* **266**
QUESTIONS, ODDITIES: *Michael Novak* **267**
THE SCREEN: *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* **268**
CRITICS' CHOICES FOR CHRISTMAS: *Claire Hahn, Eugene C. Kennedy, Wilson C. McWilliams, James M. Mellard, Raymond A. Schroth, Richard C. Wade, Gerald Weales, Margaret Wimsatt* **269**
ILLUSTRATIONS: *Cover picture of e. e. cummings: Self-portrait, 1947*

JAMES O'GARA: *Editor* JOHN DEEDY: *Managing Editor*
RAYMOND A. SCHROTH: *Associate Editor* ANNE ROBERTSON: *Editorial Assistant*
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.: *Movies* JOHN FANDEL: *Poetry*
BRIAN WICKER: *Great Britain* ALAIN WOODROW: *Paris*
HENRY TEN KORTENAAR: *Rome* JOHN COONEY: *Dublin*
LOUIS MICHAEL COLONNESE: *Latin America*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Publisher* JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

COMMONWEAL *A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.*
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1973 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada: $14 a year. Foreign $16. Single copies 50c

THE BISHOPS MEET

The Roman Catholic bishops of the United States suffer from one real drawback: a significant number of people, Catholic and non-Catholic, regard their activities as irrelevant and largely meaningless. We do not include ourselves in this number, for we do not see how anyone still concerned with the well-being of the institutional church can take such a position. However, we encounter enough people with such views to know that they constitute one of the facts of religious life in this country, and this fact militates against any recognition of merit in what the bishops do.

Take the just concluded semi-annual bishops' meeting. We can see how easy it would be to render a highly negative view of the proceedings, and the critical case certainly would not be without merit. The bishops' meeting took place against a backdrop of national crisis. The Watergate investigation had mushroomed into wholesale disclosures of spying, illegal wiretapping, officially-sponsored burglary, illicit political contributions, and various high crimes that have already decimated the Presidential staff, led to the indictment of two Cabinet officers, and that may very possibly produce the impeachment of the President. Critics of the bishops might well have looked for some kind of statement of moral leadership on these issues, and after several cardinals and bishops have danced attendance on Mr. Nixon, outsiders are unlikely to be impressed by any claim that the bishops want to avoid any appearance of political partisanship. Or consider the energy crisis: the bishops cannot offer extraordinary technical competence, of course. But there are two obvious aspects of the current environmental crisis that might have called for moral comment. One is the clear danger that it will be chiefly the poor who are victimized by the current shortages while the profits of the rich grow fatter. The second is the fact that the energy crisis raises fundamental moral questions about the proper approach to be taken toward the goods of this earth; here the church which has traditionally stressed a sacramental approach to material things might well have something constructive to say. It is, of course, eminently proper that the bishops concern themselves with the strictly religious questions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they chose to emphasize at their meeting, such as the question of first confession, communion in the hand and Marian devotion. But when such concerns are not matched by efforts at moral leadership on some of the great ethical questions confronting the nation, especially in a time of crisis such as the present, the bishops inevitably lay themselves open to the charge of irrelevance.

With that said, however, and considering only what they did and ignoring what they did not, can anything hopeful be discerned in the bishops' meeting? We think so. There is a difference between loyalty and subservience, and over the years the American bishops have always tended to be too subservient to Rome. With a certain number of distinguished exceptions, our bishops have not been famous for the vigor with which they presented the American side of any difference of opinion with the Roman Curia. As a result the omnipresent tendency of Curia officials to confuse themselves with the highest authority in the church has unfortunately been strengthened, and Rome as a result has too often acted in high-handed fashion. Currently, for example, Rome has ordered an end to promising experiments in canon law procedures on marriage cases, experiments widely approved by the American bishops and offering some hope of relaxed rigidity in difficult cases. Concurrently, Curia officials seemed to be making an arbitrary decision to insist on confession before first communion, a pastoral practice about which an increasing number of American bishops are dubious. At their meeting, therefore, the American bishops made two significant decisons: to officially protest to Rome what they regard as arbitrary action on the first communion matter, and, secondly, to appeal directly to the Pope over the head of the Curia on the marriage question. Neither step can be considered revolutionary, but both are positive moves in the right direction, hopefully indicating a welcome change in attitude on the part of many of the bishops.

The call of the bishops for a renaissance in Marian devotions is more problematic. Are we indeed suffering from "a malaise with respect to the commemoration of Mary," as the bishops argue? The mother of Jesus deserves a distinct place of honor in the church, but there have long been not one but two problems about such devotion. On the one hand, and this the bishops emphasized, many churches of the Reformation downgrade Mary and deny her rightful place. The bishops were right to call on them for more study of the question. On the other hand, though, too many Catholics go to extremes in their zeal and distort Mary's role out of all proper proportion. Indeed, in too many Catholic circles there is still a tendency to measure piety by extremes of Marian devotion—who can forget the not-so-long-ago excesses associated with the Fatima devotion? Under these circumstances, a bishop who suggested that the time was not yet ripe for a call for return to Marian fervor might have felt as welcome as an American Legionnaire deploring idolatry of the flag. The bishops' Marian pastoral is being called carefully prepared and praised for its ecumenical concern and for its emphasis on the centrality of Jesus, and this fact should be noted. Nonetheless, its issuance at this time certainly represents a pastoral risk, although perhaps a calculated one. Instead, for example, of trying to revive devotion to the rosary, the miraculous medal and the scapular, all cited by the bishops, would it not have been better to emphasize efforts to create new forms of devotion—increased emphasis on the almost totally neglected bible vigils, for instance, or, given the decline in the use of the sacrament of penance as it is now constituted, additional emphasis on sorely needed penitential services? Surely we need not rely solely on the past.

All this, of course, is making abundant use of the editorial prerogative of second-guessing, and many may disagree. About one thing, though, there can be little argument: the bishops are confronted with an extraordinarily difficult task today in a church deep in crisis. Church-going is not everything, but it is something, and in American Catholic circles attendance or non-attendance at Sunday Mass may generally be taken as quite significant. Thus as the bishops met, the newest revelations of the McCready-Greeley report, published this year in the Nov. 16 *Natonal Catholic Reporter,* took on added weight. "The precipitous decline in church attendance that has been going on for several years," they reported, "has reached almost catastrophic proportions." "The changes of the past year may well constitute the most dramatic collapse of religious devotion in the entire history of Christianity." The rate of collapse may now be slowing, but "If the worst is over the church will emerge from its present crisis only a shadow of its former self." Taken in conjunction with the number of priests leaving the active ministry and sisters leaving the convent, all this is very bad news for the bishops, and one sentence in particular twists the knife in the wound: "There seems to be a relationship between decline in church attendance and confidence in church leaders." It is this specter of no-confidence that hangs over the bishops' meetings. No one can envy them their task.

ANNIVERSARY APPEAL: Two weeks ago the Commonweal Committee of 50 sent a letter of appeal on behalf of the magazine to all subscribers. Just as we are going to press, and underlining the urgency of these efforts to raise $35,000, we have received notice of still another substantial increase in the price of the paper on which the magazine is printed—a boost that means an increase of 69 percent in the last six months alone. Reader-response to the Committee's appeal in any amount will be greatly appreciated.

THE EDITORS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ILLUSIONS AND BRITAIN

TRUTH ON TELEVISION

Reality is television. That truth seems to become ever clearer in Britain: and it has certainly come home to me even more forcibly since I last wrote in these pages. Some weeks ago, a senior adviser to the Government spoke out of turn, breaking all the rules of etiquette, in a speech in which he warned us that the harboring of illusions that we were still a 'great power' was today extremely dangerous. We must change our image of ourselves or perish: that was the nub of his message. Naturally, the Government disliked this line of talk, as it was at that very moment trying to persuade us that its voice in the Common Market was extremely influential, and that the Europeans thought us very important. I doubt if many people believed it. And I suspect that the 'reality' that is presented to us on television had a good deal to do with their incredulity.

Consider the political party conferences. The season of such conferences has just ended. Although they were widely reported in the press, on television what we saw were a few excerpts from speeches by the predictable party leaders and interviews between them and various commentators. The atmosphere of the conference hall and its surrounding corridors is quite lost in such a treatment. It is not surprising therefore to find that for most people, the party politicians seem to have less and less relevance to their own lives. The overwhelming television impression of the conferences was that of bombast and futility. The Liberals spent much of their time boasting of their recent election successes and talked of becoming the next Government, or the next but one, while the 'Young Liberals' argued the importance of letting down the tires of juggernaut lorries coming from Europe to despoil the countryside in Kent and Sussex. The Labor Party promised itself the extermination of private education and a really painful taxation of the rich, but from past experience people know that most of that is rhetoric. The Tories voted to restore hanging, and watched the Chancellor of the Exchequer call Enoch Powell a fanatic. That is about the sum of party achievements in terms of television: the things that stick in the memory.

Of course, anyone who actually goes to a conference knows it isn't really like that at all. But the trouble today is that what matters is not the reality, but the illusion. Or perhaps it would be better to say, that reality itself has somehow disappeared in the gap that exists between what we all know, and what we see on the screen. The news that is today pouring out of the Middle East and Washington illustrates this very clearly. The current Arab-Israeli war is clearly one in which Britain can be nothing but a spectator. The Foreign Secretary's insistence on not selling any arms to either side may be 'even-handed' (in my opinion it is the only instance I can remember in which the Government has behaved better than the opposition since the last general election). But what is certain is that it has nothing to do with keeping our hands clean in the expectation of being invited to help with making the peace. Peace will be decided in our absence. Meanwhile, therefore, we watch the war much as we watched the Fischer-Spassky chess match. Experts come on the screen to tell us the foreseeable consequences of every move; the pictures of knocked-out tanks and exploding aeroplanes resemble piles of discarded rooks and pawns; the bookies open their accounts. The whole thing has become a spectator sport, except that the spectators are not even able to make their cheers or boos audible to the players on the field. Perhaps this is why even the cheering itself turns sour. How else can we explain a phenomenon like the statement of a well-known liberal socialist on a radio discussion show that the Arabs are simply 'a degenerate race'? Such statements, from such sources, can only be explained as the result of the frustration caused by not being able to do anything except cheer—and when the cheering is not even for the participants' benefit, but for that of the cheerer himself. Such is the narcissism engendered by living in the wilderness of mirrors which is television.

When war becomes a spectator sport on a mass scale, spectator sport naturally begins to look like war. That at any rate would seem to be the explanation of two events in the football world that have rocked the country to its foundations—if the commentators are to be believed. First of all, England was knocked out of the World Cup by the Poles. This was regarded by some as the greatest tragedy that has ever befallen the nation. It has unmanned us. Dismissal of the presiding generals and strategists has inevitably been demanded. Impeachment, indeed, of the arch villain, the England manager Sir Al Ramsey, would not be inappropriate, if some football enthusiasts are to be believed. But coming hard on the heels of this tragic denouement was the news of the dismissal of the most famous, not to say notorious, team manager in the country, Brian Clough of Derby County. Clough is a manager who has attained his fame largely through his dead-pan outrageousness on the television screen. In a sense, television both created and destroyed him. In his image modern football is somehow summed up: plastic men kick a plastic ball about a field of plastic grass, while plastic experts decide their fates,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and plastic viewers at home eat plastic sandwiches and absorb the instant plastic opinions of the plastic experts.

Yet not quite everything on television is plastic. I remember one set of images of the last few weeks that gave me the authentic feel of participating in a real world. This was a brief sequence from film taken by an Icelandic gunboat of a collision, or near-collision with a British frigate. The two vessels lurched and foamed at each other like a couple of male seals competing for the favors of a potential mate, and the deep-throated howls of their sirens as they sheered away from each other at the end of the encounter added a final touch of truth to the seasick-making realism of the moment. But perhaps even this incident fits the overall pattern. For the cod-war, absurd though it is when looked at in the perspective of contemporary history, is at least a war in which real Britons are involved. All the old romance of the 'Royal Navy' is there, together with the bulldog spirit of the English working man in the shape of the indomitable trawlermen. Rich but patriotic ship-owners add a touch of colorful pride to the scene, showing that all classes of society are welded into one nation in this war. In such a scenario, Mr. Heath's apparently successful attempts to arrive at a compromise with the Icelanders begins to look rather like a dirty trick at the expense of the fighting men in the front line. Such is the ironic consequence of turning war into a spectator sport: peace too becomes part of the game. BRIAN WICKER

(Brian Wicker is Commonweal*'s regular correspondent in Great Britain.)*

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

THE WORD FROM BRAZIL

SAD DAYS IN RECIFE

These are sad days in Recife, in the Brazilian North-east. On July 24, Operation Hope, a self-help organization sponsored by Dom Helder Camara, Archbishop of Recife, was holding a regular meeting at the Episcopal Palace. During a break, Vieira and Dida went out for a short walk in the night air. They did not return. They have not been heard of since. Vieira, an agronomist, lived and worked at the Taquari sugar cane plantation, a 16-farm project owned and directed by Operation Hope. Dida was a young member of the Local Residents Council of Bairro Coelhos and a minor functionary at the Palace. Coelhos is one of the poorest favelas in Recife. Police and military authorities, when questioned, had no information—and no interest in looking for the two men or their "kidnappers." Their abduction was simply a "non-fact."

On August 29, Biu disappeared in the same way. A seminarian at the Regional Institute of Theology, he helped co-ordinate the Bible study groups known as "Encounters of Brothers"—another promotion of Dom Helder—and was working in Youth Pastoral. In late September, news leaked out from Military H.Q. that he would soon be released. Instead, his sister, four-months pregnant, was taken in for three days of questioning.

Next it was Amorim's turn. In his own favela-bairro he had organized Operation Hope—bringing the people together to press for piped water, garbage-removal, sewage and other services. When local authorities failed or delayed interminably, they pitched in to do the work themselves, and they are now completing, from their own resources, a civic center where they can have meetings, training courses, medical attendance, a primary school. A week before, Dom Helder was a popular guest at a party thrown by the neighborhood to celebrate the birth of Amorim's first baby. On the morning of October 4, Amorim awoke to find a car with three men parked outside his house. No official plates, no uniforms, but in Recife there is a saying: "Beware of the car with three men!" Eventually he had to leave for work. On the way he was forced into the car and has not been heard of since. Another "non-fact"!

Like the raid on the building which houses the Curia of the Archdiocese, the Regional Secretariats of CNBB and CRB. This occurred soon after release of the protest document "I Have Heard the Cries of My People" signed by Dom Helder and most of the Bishops and Religious Superiors of the North-East. Later the Federal Censorship Bureau in Rio sent the following warning to the Press: "Be it forbidden to make any or every reference to or commentary on the invasion of the Metropolitan Curia of Recife and the taking of documents pertaining to the CNBB, since such is absolutely false and without foundation."

What are the hidden motives behind this persecution? First of all, it is a subtle way of getting at Dom Helder who is too well known internationally and too well loved by the people to be turned into an imprisoned hero or a martyr. By sporadically abducting his friends and collaborators his enemies are playing a hideous cat-and-mouse game with him. A number of times he has gone to the Secret and Military Police, with his bag packed, offering himself with the words of his Master: "If I am the one you seek, let these go their way." But 20th-Century oppressors have more refined methods of torture than bodily crucifixion.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Secondly, the abductions have generated a climate of fear in the poor bairros where Operation Hope and Encounters of Brothers have their meetings. The families of participants are particularly nervous and their neighbors ask suspiciously: "Don't these arrests prove the rumors that Dom Helder is really a subversive and his groups Communistic?" Everybody knows that the jails of Recife are already full of students and syndicate workers. The atmosphere of fear and mistrust is heightened by complete censorship of these "non-facts" on TV, radio and press. Instead, the wildest and most fearsome rumors abound. Recently, the palace was broken into at night, functionaries have been harassed in the street outside, one has resigned out of fear and others are near breaking point.

On Thursday, October 4, came some real news. At a time last year when it looked as if Church and State were on a collision course, the Federal Government and the CNBB agreed to set up a bilateral commission consisting of three Generals and the President, Vice-President and Secretary General of CNBB. Its role was to try to solve problems in areas of Church-State attrition or conflict. The Bishops, at the request of Dom Helder, had asked the Generals to enquire about the whereabouts of the missing men. At the September meeting of the Commission, General Muricy had informed them that Vieira and Dida were being held at the H.Q. of the Brazilian Fourth Army in Recife. This information was at once passed on to Dom Helder who, the next day, asked for an explanation from the Commanding Officer. (Under present law, nobody may be held for more than 30 days incommunicado or 60 days without charge.) But the reply was still the same. The military authorities at Recife know nothing about Vieira and Dida. General Muricy must have made a mistake!

Both men may, in fact, be dead. Recently, on a "tip-off," Dom Helder visited the morgue where four years ago he found the battered body of Padre Henrique, labeled "unknown." There he found the body of another "unknown," a youth officially listed as killed in a traffic accident but with a peculiar round hole in his head. It was not Vieira or Dida—but who was it?

On the very day of his enquiry, the fifth victim disappeared. Antonio also had worked in Operation Hope. On October 17, Arnaldo was taken away and the following day nine men, in three cars, picked up Diogo. Arnaldo was President of the Local Residents' Council of Bairro Coelhos, of which Dida was a member, and Diogo's father is a functionary at the Curia. The next day, Carlito was taken, again by nine men. He was a member of a Local Residents Council in Casa Amarela, but by no means a leading figure.

Biu was released the day Diogo was taken. He had been held at Military H.Q. After five weeks of questioning about Dom Helder, Operation Hope, Encounters of Brothers, youth groups, his seminary professors and their teachings, he was told that his arrest had been a case of "mistaken identity."

Yet it is out of these tragic events that the renewed Church of Recife is being born. What years of pastoral planning, courses, seminars, had failed to achieve, the regime through its official and para-official persecution is succeeding in doing. Vigils of prayer for those who have disappeared are full to overflowing—in spite of being unadvertised. Their mottos are "neither hate nor fear" and "Fear not, I have overcome the world." Overall numbers of those attending meetings of Operation Hope and Encounters of Brothers have dropped, but they are still being held, even though those who attend know that they are risking life and liberty by coming. The wheat is being winnowed from the chaff. Faith is being purified and unity forged. This inspiring courage of God's little and weak ones is what gives Dom Helder and his friends the hope they need to continue the struggle. Right now they are studying how best to proclaim as "the Lord's year of favor" the Holy Year announced by Paul VI, the year when the Spirit of the Lord will be given "to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free" (Luke, 4, 18-19). This inspiring courage of the weak is what most seems to preoccupy many of the defenders of the regime.

Sad days in Recife? Yes, but glorious days too!

(This article was written by a priest in Brazil who must for obvious reasons remain anonymous. On Dec. 8-9, Dom Helder Camara will participate in a weekend meeting to be held at the Rothko Chapel, Houston, Texas.)

COMING

ALAIN WOODROW writes about the recent upsurge of debate over nuclear weapons in France:

"Before the recent series of nuclear tests, the French bishops and the Protestant Federation published an important statement on the sale of arms, in which they condemned 'the diabolical process in which France is imprisoned,' and also 'France's high-handed refusal to consider the concern and irritation of the Pacific nations over the nuclear tests.' Two months later, the bishops' Justice and Peace Commission and the Protestant Federation published another joint declaration, on the then current series of tests this time, stating among other things that 'Many Christians feel that France's unilateral renunciation of its strategic nuclear armament policy would be an important gesture and a dynamic expression of the gospel.'"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WAYWARD PRESSMEN

Back-scratching is a skill finely developed by practitioners of both the press and politics. In a rough-and-tumble political precinct such as Washington, this skill is rewarding and both groups find it particularly useful in critical situations. Particularly, when they scratch each other's back. Of course, not all do it. Those who do it best, furthermore, are not always the best of their respective crafts. But even the best do it—occasionally.

Pressmen and politicians continuously negotiate with each other over the spoils of free news and free publicity. The legend, of course suggests otherwise. But then, ours is not a time for legends, at least old ones.

Newcomers to federal office in the executive and legislative branches find some of this puzzling—this back-scratching. It's difficult for them to talk to established pressmen. The newcomer is often overlooked or shunted aside if he, or she, doesn't talk in clichés and if the headline phrase does not come easily. Thoughtful officials are often blacked-out.

Pressmen will point out, in explanation, that there are terrifying time pressures. But these are not as frequent as they would assert. Even the best of reporters on the dead-line want officials to talk in clichés. Pressmen become impatient and uneasy if there is too much "background" material contained in responses or if the new officials' thoughts are tentative. The modern demand is for slogans. The agile official prospers who tailors his speeches and other remarks to these demands for compassion and (over) simplification. Officials, who don't, face tough sledding. Sometimes the most widely quoted are not always the wisest; they've simply mastered technique as art.

Traditionally, muckrakers have placed responsibility for the malperformance of the press in the laps of publishers and/or editors. For years George Seldes contended in his newsletter, *In Fact,* that a fair and truthful coverage of events was thwarted by a conspiracy of advertisers and big-business publishers. At the same time, reporters were portrayed as tough and honest Clark Gable types. It was always Henry Luce who butchered the hired-hand's copy; never the hired-hand who faltered.

This sentimental folk-tale is showing its age—accelerated by the impact of the Watergate Scandals.

Pressmen have many obstacles, of course. There are sacred bulls as well as sacred cows on even the most well-motivated newspapers. Owners do wield an influence —a contemporary scandal being the destruction of the best afternoon newspaper in the nation, the (Washington, D.C.) *Evening Star* by its owners. Publishers do make some impression upon their newspapers. Stories are still "killed" by editors. The *Washington Post* editors were not consistently resolute as they projected the path to which persistent reporting of Watergate might lead—and did lead. Morton Mintz of the *Washington Post* was obliged to fight his way into print when nearly a decade ago he insisted Ralph Nader had a legitimate story to tell and he first brought to his editors harrowing tales of dangerous and unsafe products.

In fairness, it should be said, there were no "good old days" of golden newspapering, Hillary Johnson and mythmakers at *Editor & Publisher* magazine to the contrary. Good reporters are more numerous today, but there should be more—and more newspapers should be better [Fred Friendly to the contrary, radio-and-television is still an entertainment and their news-shows reflect this].

Good news coverage begins with the reporter. He's the man on the spot, the infantryman. Nothing can help, if he doesn't have the "heart" for combat. The vacuous performance of managing editors of daily newspapers in their "questioning" of President Nixon on national television in mid-November shows that they're no better informed than the casual reader of their own newspapers. These editors demonstrated they couldn't conspire to shape the news, because they don't know even how to ask a thoughtful, appropriate question.

As Lippmann has pointed out, news is an affair involving an event, a reporter and the reaction of the newspaper reader to the reporter's story. It's a lonely job, if done correctly. Journalism schools can't teach it. They still merit the condemnation that A. J. Liebling applied to the most prestigious, the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. It had, he said, "all the intellectual content of a school for A&P clerks."

Any constant observer of what is grandiosely called the "Washington Press Corps" can refute Patrick Buchanan, President Nixon's press analyst, when he calls them "hounds of hell." More like pets of privilege.

There are good reporters in Washington—mostly working for other than the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post.* Bill McGoffin of the *Chicago Daily News,* Alan Emory of the *Boston Globe,* Dick Dudman and Jim Deakin of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and Jim McCartney of Knight Newspapers. The Washington Bureaus of the *Wall Street Journal,* the *Baltimore Sun* and *Los Angeles Times* contain capable reporters. The *New York Times* bureau in Washington contains more politicians than pressmen. Frank Eleazer, until recently UPI chief in the House of Representatives, knew more about the Congress than the entire *Times* bureau put

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

together. The few good TV reporters suffer from the medium through which they broadcast their message and most of these good ones first learned the ropes newspapering, as did Paul Duke of NBC.

But individual performance is not the only test. There is lacking an effective machinery of knowledge to help us to understand events and, thereby, help us to govern ourselves. The existing machinery too often makes us hunger for the side-shows, instead of the main tent.

Group behavior and certain techniques of reporters hamper good news-coverage.

The ambitious Washington press corps—actually, there are numerous sub-corps—is afflicted by a form of behavior that can be called "pack journalism."

Washington pressmen are as faddish as fashion-page editors. They interview each other in the lounges of the press rooms in government buildings like gossipy housewives trying to wring the last drop from a neighborhood scandal. By this pooling of information, pack journalism enables its members to be protected from being kept ignorant of major elements of a story—or even stories themselves. Even good reporters engage in pack journalism from time to time—it's a newspaper form of market-sharing. The good "loners," such as Sy Hersh of the *New York Times,* scorn it, as did I. F. Stone. Sometimes the best stories are not locked in safes, guarded by Gordon Liddy, but in the paper-bound volumes of outwardly dreary looking hearing transcripts and government agency reports.

Another technique inhibits good reporting. It is the fine art of "clientism." Some reporters collect news-sources as a lawyer collects clients. These news-sources are his meal-ticket. Steady, reliable sources of conventional information and occasionally a protective device when the occasional deadline story is required. A reporter covering the House is well insulated if he has made friends with, for example, the Majority (Democratic) Whip, the minority (Republican) leader, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee and two or three legislative assistants to senior House members. But, too often, the price in return is to "go soft" when these sources perform inadequately. Not suppress the news, mind you, just write blurry stories. Columnists do likewise. One syndicated columnist who peddled himself to Senator Robert Kennedy has since peddled himself to the top-echelons of the Nixon Administration. These echelons having departed by request and some by indictment, he's between a rock and a hard place these days. This is a form of the "spoils system"—it's bad for the practitioners and bad for the readers.

The spoils system, clientism, pack journalism—all make for what the late Ralph McGill of the *Atlanta Constitution* called "woodpulp pablum."

And this evokes another observation, seemingly a perverse one. One problem is that there's too much newsprint. Almost any 3-pound edition of the *New York Sunday Times* can be squeezed into about 16 columns or two pages of informative news. Much of the remainder of the news section are rewritten articles from press releases or organizations and warmed-over stories the *Times'* regional bureaus rewrote from the local newspapers. In mid-November, one section of the *Washington Post* carried stories about the underground press in Manila, a new variety of high-yield rice in Manila, AID work in Cambodia, the death of terrorists in Brazil, the possibility of a Yugoslavian oil pipeline being constructed, the impact of the most recent Middle East war on South Lebanon and the work of private tax-collectors in Italy. It somehow recalls James Thurber's purported complaint about a story about pigeons that was submitted to him at the *New Yorker* magazine—it told him more about pigeons than he wanted to know. The discipline of less newsprint would be constructive—witness the newsy but fewer pages of the *Baltimore Sun,* the *Paris Herald* and the American Survey section of the (London) *Economist.*

Coverage of the Watergate Scandals furnishes a good example of the weaknesses of the predominant techniques and group behavior of the pressmen in Washington. They ignored or mocked it for weeks after the *Washington Post* first broke the story. Now the pack bays after those involved in the Watergate and ignores other major stories in government.

Given the hostile attitude of the Nixon Administration and a Supreme Court decision in June, 1972 relating to the discouraging reliance of newsmen upon the Constitution in order to decline to testify about their sources, there have been various proposals put forward to "protect" the press. There's been proposed a "shield law" to protect sources, a Press Council, British-style, and another Hutchins Report (1946).

There needs to be less talk about privilege and more about responsibility. The main problem is the newspapers themselves. The First Amendment atrophies unless it is used. Too often in newspapering, it's the bland leading the bland. Important stories about wrong-doing are difficult to find and substantiate. It takes not hours or days—but weeks and months. Most newspapers won't give their reporters this kind of leeway. Few reporters insist they be given the time.

The Press and the Politician are the focus of a common attitude these days. They are distrusted. Often the press is attacked for the wrong reasons or the wrong people. Someday, the right reasons may be put forward and the press will be in real trouble. As the Hutchins Commission report stated: "The press itself is always one of the chief agents in destroying or in building the basis of its own significance." SISYPHUS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CENSORSHIP OR PORNOGRAPHY?

MARK TAYLOR

High Court rulings have exacerbated an always precarious state of affairs

Pornography, like abortion, encourages extremes of thinking and argument more often than not both shoddy and silly. If one defends pornography, he will usually present it as a vision of the New Jerusalem, and if he attacks it, he will probably end up sounding like the precious bodily fluids man in *Dr. Strangelove*. Such stridency arises from the peculiarly hostile and conceptually dependent association of pornography and censorship, as categorically separate as the two, and our thoughts about them, should be.

If one is actively against pornography, then it follows that he will desire its inaccessibility, and since dirty books and blue movies are not going to disappear, that means he will advocate some form of external censorship. But censorship is something that people don't like to seem capricious about, and to make it appear worthwhile one may risk no end of hysteria in describing pornography. On the other hand, if one is unequivocally opposed to censorship, the one obscene word in the civil libertarian's lexicon, it will not necessarily follow that he supports pornography, but it certainly behooves him to be as charitable to it as he can. Since pornography shares the sacred media of communication and art—print, canvas, celluloid—and since there may be a murky area where communication or art dissolves into pornography, where the two are hard to distinguish, then he, censorship's foe, will be for a climate in which pornography is possible. And inasmuch as no one wishes to allow what he acknowledges to be bad, he will then probably argue that pornography is good, or morally neutral, a matter of individual preference like corned beef, or a price well worth paying for certain treasured liberties. It's a sort of quandary, I think, that exists nowhere else; one can oppose heroin without having to answer to whiskey drinkers, or war without risking the wrath of football fans.

The Supreme Court's June anti-obscenity rulings have exacerbated this always precarious state of affairs, for whether or not the Court will succeed in doing what it intends, it has already done what it did not intend. The Court gave to individual states and localities the right to ban books and movies that "appeal to the prurient interest in sex, which portray sexual conduct in a patently offensive way, and which, taken as a whole, do not have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value," and to the communities themselves it gave the mandate for applying these criteria. Whatever may be said against this decision, the Supreme Court can scarcely be accused of pursuing an extinct species or imaginary being, for there has never been such an abundance of the real hard-core stuff about. But whereas the Supreme Court clearly meant to allow a community to prohibit, say, *Deep Throat* or *The Devil in Miss Jones,* if it wished to, almost the first practical consequence of its decision has been the proscription, in Georgia, of *Carnal Knowledge,* a film whose seriousness of artistic purpose seems to me quite beyond question. And I suspect the five Justices responsible for the Supreme Court decision would agree with me there. Which just goes to show, the anti-censorship argument goes, the kind of repressiveness and stupidity that such laws always lead to.

Writing the majority opinion for the Supreme Court, Chief Justice Burger did not spell out explicitly the difference between what he hoped states or communities

MARK TAYLOR, *whose book on George Herbert will appear this winter, teaches English at Manhattan College.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might find permissible and what they might reject, but he did suggest, tentatively, the sort of thing that might be "patently offensive": depictions of "ultimate sex acts, normal or perverted, actual or simulated" and "masturbation, excretory functions, and lewd exhibition of the genitals." The weakness of such guidelines, of course, derives from the level of abstraction common to such words as "patently," "ultimate," and "lewd," but that a greater degree of exactitude is called for (even unto writing into law that organ *x* may not be shown in direct contact with organ *y*) means neither that such exactitude is impossible nor that Mr. Burger has failed to describe some of the characteristics common to *all* pornography. There can be no pornography apart from flagrant sexual exhibitionism, and any pretense otherwise is sophistry. Great popularity has attached in recent years to such phrases as "the pornography of violence" and "the obscenity of the Vietnam war"; I have no objection to such collocations, but it should be recognized that they are metaphors whose forcefulness is borrowed from certain extreme (and implicitly improper) representations of human sexuality. No one who likes violence calls it pornographic.

Whatever characteristics a book or movie must possess before it can be called pornographic; it is not their mere presence, or their multiplication or the way they are combined, that makes the work pornographic, but rather the *a priori* attitude that they reveal toward the work's "characters," if they may so be designated, and by extension toward all human beings. In pornography, nothing is allowed to interfere with the presentation of sexual activity in one or more of its forms (the number of these forms, by the way, is soberingly finite despite what *Screw* magazine editor Al Goldstein's hyperbole might suggest): not any occasional interest of the characters in other matters, not any suggestion that the characters are defined by other than their sexual proclivities and capacities, not any hint that there is more under the sun than sex. In pornographic fiction the first sacrifice will always be the language itself, for any felicitous phrase, any word or stylistic idiosyncrasy that might arrest the reader's attention and trigger his imagination, is detrimental to the work's sexual purpose and thus taboo, if I may use so odd a word. The language suitable, indeed essential, to written pornography is cliché, tending toward the purely denotative formulae of mathematics or the physical sciences; read some so-called Victorian underground classic like *My Secret Life,* and try to make a case for its prose style.

But it is in the movies that pornography finds its ideal medium, less because language can there be eliminated altogether than because the very nature of the camera's lens allows the reduction of people to a few pulsating organs. And that, after all, is the whole point: the achievement of a great work of art exceeds the totality of its discrete parts; in pornography the number of discrete parts actually exceeds the whole that they produce. As one ad hoc test of what is or is not a pornographic film I would suggest this: if, a week after you've seen the film, you can describe the heroine's face, if you believe you'd recognize her on the street, then the film is probably not pornographic. For myself, I recall clearly what Ann-Margret looked like in *Carnal Knowledge* but not at all what Georgina Spelvin looked like in *The Devil in Miss Jones* although 1) I saw the latter film much more recently than the former; 2) my prurient interest aroused, I was no less attentive to the latter film; and 3) Miss Spelvin's face is certainly a major character in her movie, as much so as her other features, even if it is treated as an interchangeable mechanical part of a sexual machine, not as one sign of valuable human uniqueness.

People As Machines

Of course, if you do not believe in the potential uniqueness of human beings and their experiences, then I see no reason why you should have reservations about pornography. In fact, if people are all the same then they are all machines, and pornography, which says that, becomes indeed the *sine qua non* of "human" expression, the most faithful model of life. Although genuinely pornographic works are at least as old as Western culture, it is no accident that, as a distinct and substantial body of written composition, pornography is around 200 years old (I offer Cleland and Sade as pioneers), despite its having to wait until more recently for the perfection that cinematography could bring it to. It is about the same age, in other words, as a whole complex of ideas and feelings identifiable with the development of modern technology, to the effect that the machine is a god on which salvation depends, and the more nearly an individual can function as a machine, the more godlike he will become.

The best factory worker is the man or woman who can obliterate his or her own will in the interest of efficiency, production, progress, the greatest good for the greatest number. The individual may still be unique, possessed of a soul or whatever, but the less said about that in public the better. Victorian pornography was no safety valve, as is so often said, no outlet for socially repressed instincts, but rather the application to private, sexual life of the same exploitative motive that was everywhere being applied to the material world. That this pornography was clandestine shows only that most Victorians were reluctant to accept the full implications of their own premises. Today, matters are ironically reversed. Most of us, I hope, are opposed to unqualified laissez-faire capitalism in a world approaching physical depletion, but we are unwilling to put restraints on pornography, though its unlimited availability may deplete us in other ways.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

David Holbrook, the English poet and critic, has recently edited a collection of essays (*The Case Against Pornography*, Open Court Publisher Co., La Salle, Ill., $8.95, 1973) that is valuable both for the cogency and articulateness of the arguments it presents and for the solid intellectual credentials of its contributors—men and women like Rollo May, George Steiner, Pamela Hansford Johnson, and Irving Kristol, who can't be dismissed as bluenoses, as people who, unable to enjoy life themselves, detest its enjoyment by others, a standard criticism leveled at the anti-pornographer. One particularly frightening point made (as hypothesis, not as firm conclusion) by five or six of these 20-odd writers is that the logical and perhaps inevitable result of the dehumanizing attitude of pornography is the mentality of the totalitarian state, even of its death camps.

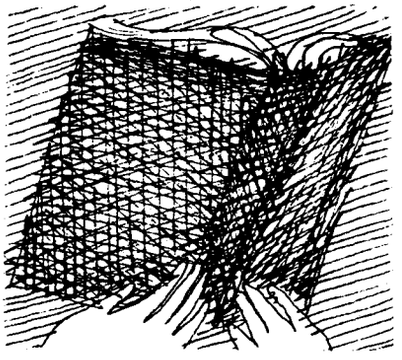
"The novels being produced under the new code of total statement," writes Mr. Steiner, "shout at their personages: strip, fornicate, perform this or that act of sexual perversion. So did the S.S. guards at rows of living men and women. The total attitudes are not, I think, entirely distinct. There may be deeper affinities than we as yet understand between the 'total freedom' of the uncensored erotic imagination and the total freedom of the sadist." (And note this: in her famous essay on "The Pornographic Imagination," which seems much more tolerant of its subject than anything in Mr. Holbrook's collection, Susan Sontag says that "what pornography is really about, ultimately, isn't sex but death.")

When Mr. Steiner's essay first appeared, in *Encounter* magazine, it raised a storm of protest (mainly from the liberal community), and so for book publication he added this note: "I was . . . trying to raise the question of what relation there *may* be between the dehumanization of the individual in pornography and the making naked and anonymous of the individual in the totalitarian state (the concentration camp being the logical epitome of that state). Both pornography and totalitarianism seem to me to set up power relations which must necessarily violate privacy." And elsewhere in *The Case Against Pornography* Ernest van den Haag points to the infantile fantasies in which "people are literally devoured, tortured, mutilated, and altogether dehumanized," and asserts that "Such fantasies are acted out—e.g. in concentration camps—whenever authority fails to control, or supports, the impulses it usually helps to repress." If in all this speculation there *may* be any truth, then pornography should be taken at least as seriously as censorship.

But where does one draw the line, and who is to decide? I can't account for the response to *Carnal Knowledge* of the Georgia courts, a response that I deplore, and neither can I shunt it aside as a one-time thing; such abuses will recur again and again, for the best and best-intentioned laws are no stronger than their imperfect, often venal human interpreters. (We all say we'd rather have a hundred guilty men go free than that one innocent one should be punished, but would we in fact like to set aside all laws against homicide—the only sure way of preventing an innocent man from ever being punished, at least by the state, for a murder he did not commit?)

Nevertheless, and objectively speaking, art is not pornography. On the visible spectrum there will be a band of blue, a band of green, and, between them, a band of blue-greens, turquoises, aquamarines, where blue is on its way to becoming green, and vice versa. Looking at this intermediate band, you and I could legitimately disagree on the precise location of the line at which more-blue-than-green blue-green becomes, after a moment of being equally-blue-and-green blue-green, more-green-than-blue blue-green, but we will not disagree that in theory there is such a line, and much more important, that there is a distinct qualitative difference between blue and green.

On the spectrum of verbal structures, a world like "Pauline Réage's" *The Story of O* probably falls in the band between art and pornography; I would once have said that it was more pornography than art, but now I think Miss Sontag's essay has persuaded me otherwise, though I doubt that it could persuade the Georgia courts.



However, there are very few books and movies that inhabit this dubious area; *Carnal Knowledge* is not, alas, among them, but then neither is *The Devil in Miss Jones* (for all the critics' disingenuous, or plain stupid, comparisons of it with Sartre's *No Exit*).

A recent issue of the *New York Times* printed a number of people's reactions to the Supreme Court ruling. Since most were the statements of members of the film community—writers, directors, actors—who feel personally and immediately handicapped by the decision, most were predictably against it. That I can understand, but what disturbs me is the view of the Reverend Malcolm Boyd, identified as an Episcopal priest, that "what is 'patently offensive' to one person is 'patently inoffensive' to another. 'Prurient' or 'dirty' in one person's view is 'healthy' and 'clean' according to another's standard." He goes on to propose that the "determination of 'serious value' " can lead to oppression and limit "freedom of expression."

I think I appreciate the urgency certain ecclasiastics

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

feel these days to be *au courant*—and if Father Boyd had argued that pornography is good, I would be interested in learning why he thought so—but I am greatly saddened that a priest finds such judgments neither his own especial business nor anyone's. The phrase "serious value" is quoted from Mr. Burger, but the effect, I think intentional, of Father Boyd's inverted commas is mockery, a pooh-poohing of the antique notion that there are things of absolute, serious value. This is dysfunction of the moral sense, and for a priest, I should imagine, professional suicide. (A lawyer friend of mine makes the same argument, but I suppose that is *his* professional stock in trade.)

Like the problematic relationship of the pornographic impulse to the sadistic impulse of the concentration camp guard, the question whether or not anything is better than anything else, though often obscured, is fundamental to the pornography-censorship debate. Is it all, really, a matter of opinion? Am I being subjective, arbitrary, and even elitist when I ask my students to read *King Lear* and when I tell them, if asked, that *Fanny Hill* will be at best a waste of their time? We've heard from Father Boyd; here is Chief Justice Burger: "If we accept the unprovable assumption that a complete education requires certain books, and the well-nigh universal belief that good books, plays, and art lift the spirit, improve the mind, enrich the human personality, and develop character, can we then say that a state legislature may not act on the corollary assumption that commerce in obscene books, or public exhibitions focused on obscene conduct, have a tendency to exert a corrupting and debasing impact leading to antisocial behavior?"

Some years earlier, Irving Kristol said the same thing, "If you beliece that no one was ever corrupted by a book, you have also to believe that no one was ever improved by a book (or a play or a movie). You have to believe, in other words, that all art is morally trivial and that, consequently, all education is morally irrelevant." Varying the emphasis somewhat, Walter Berns, whose essay Mr. Holbrook also includes in his collection, insists that a situation in which a good work might be mistaken for a bad one is less pernicious, in the long run, than a situation in which it is claimed that no qualitative difference exists between any good work and any bad one.

Mr. Burger is right, of course, about the "unprovable assumption" underlying his argument, but I think it is pertinent to ask if we don't, some of us anyway, try to imitate, to approach, the models that are held up to us, irrespective of their moral worth. I wonder, that is, whether there don't exist, among the many forces that determine our identities as individuals and a society, the *images* we are told are ours, however unprovable or even improbable any resemblance. The basic assumption of advertising is that we do pursue these images, and I rather agree.

I am convinced, furthermore, that many of us retain throughout our adult lives a capacity for varying the desired image, or having it varied for us, manipulated, even without our knowledge and against our will, which is to say that we may continue to experience real and significant shifts in consciousness. It seems incontestable that in the last few years hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, of American women have totally readjusted their views of themselves, their strengths and limitations, their identities as women and people, their relationships to men, and that this adjustment is of so profound a character that it can be called only a transformation of consciousness. And if the dignity of women may be raised by one set of stimuli—raised to the point of effecting practical, tangible changes in their lives—why may it not be commensurately lowered by an opposite set?

(I advance the phenomenon of women's liberation only by way of analogy—if one part of the human race may change its mind about itself, why not the whole human race?—but in fact heterosexual pornography, though terribly debasing of humanity in general, is especially so of women. Linda Lovelace may indeed have enjoyed her work in *Deep Throat*, but the allegation that the movie is socially redeemed by its unfamiliar emphasis on a woman's pleasure is so much cant.)

Hamlet acknowledges that man, though the quintessence of dust, is *also* noble in reason and infinite in faculty; *Deep Throat* tells us that man or woman, is *only* the quintessence of dust.* To accept one of these images and reject the other would appear the most vital, and moral, of human choices, and not just for the very young; it is the option of affirming or denying our status as human beings.

I close with a faintly heretical proposition. We all treasure freedom of expression, and we are all chary of possible infringements upon it, but consider this: the main enemy of freedom of expression is not censorship but pornography. And in saying that, I am really concerned not with the artist's right to expression, but with the infinitely more important right of the average man or woman. I do wonder, however, how many actors and actresses find themselves at a professional disadvantage because they refuse to copulate before the camera, and how many novels fail to sell because they include no salacious scene to be quoted on the dust jacket. "Where everything can be said with a shout," writes George Steiner, "less and less can be said in a low voice.")

Resistance to pornography is one important part of a hard battle for the survival of the human imagination, where freedom of expression begins and ends. From our thoughts and dreams emerges the sense of our uniqueness

* By "dust" Shakespeare probably meant excrement. "*This* is the secret of really vulgar and of pornographical people," wrote D. H. Lawrence: "The sex flow and the excrement flow is the same to them." Q. E. D.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and of the uniqueness and then the preciousness and desirability of others; here are formed, in Yeats' phrase, those images that yet fresh images beget, and here alone. It is when joined to the imagination that sexuality becomes human, becomes more than the coupling of beasts —becomes, sometimes, an act of love. But pornography (and, I would add, such "scientific" studies as those of Masters and Johnson) tells us we are, after all, only beasts or machines. It makes each of us indistinguishable from everyone else, except by size, appetite and stamina. It steals our dreams, as Moira Keenan writes in *The Case Against Pornography*; it invades our imaginations—today, and perhaps always, the only real place of privacy—atrophies them, if it can, and becomes the architect of our fantasies. It confirms what we have feared all along, that we really are no different.

And, finally, pornography seeks to make us no longer *care* about one another. Who can care about a machine? The real voyeur, the perpetual looker-on, can never care about the Other because he can hope for no union with it; it will remain always the Other. The Bible is quite right in placing lust of the eyes, which is voyeurism, after lust of the flesh and before the pride of life in an inventory of sins that charts the progressive apathy, alienation and isolation of the Self.

In the eighth book of Homer's *Odyssey* the bard Demodocus sings of the illicit alliance of Ares and Aphrodite, wife of the lame Hephaestus; of how Hephaestus forged invisible unbreakable chains, which he used to trap the lovers in their bed, held in their moment of union; and of how Hephaestus brought the other gods to his house to look upon Ares and Aphrodite, while the other goddesses, filled with shame, remained at home. At the sight of the lovers, Demodocus tells us, "the blessed gods roared with inextinguishable laughter." There is rich irony in this laughter, but I think I hear, also, notes of embarrassment and shame, that self-preserving modesty that kept their wives at home. There are things, they know, that even gods should not look upon.

E. E. CUMMINGS

JOHN FANDEL

hee hee cunnings' fonetty kinglish

If the poetry of E.E. Cummings could be like Caesar's Gaul divided into three parts, to write about it would be easy. But his poetry is not that patly divisible; it is not to be conquered by a neat category. If it were that patly devisible, it would still be, like Gaul, a unity; it would be, like the Trinity, a mysterious one. To write about Cummings' poetry takes at least as much nerve as to write about the Trinity which has caused as many writers to flounder as Moby Dick. There is a great body of blurbology on the poetry, nevertheless. Sampling it is to taste the temptation of the delicious phrase: Marianne Moore's "a concentrate of titanic significance"; Allen Tate's "the dissidence of dissent"; John Dos Passos' "a filigree delicacy of hairbreadth exact statement;" Mark Van Doren's "superb in satire and in sentiment;" Malcolm Cowley's "a new language, an e.e. cummingsese." What a press the poetry had! What a press, the poet! Horace Gregory wrote: "Cummings' protests revealed the true character of New England Puritan heritage crossed with the emotional temper of St. Francis." Archibald MacLeish stated "cummings was one of the most uniquely himself writers who ever lived." A *New York Times* editorial declared: "He wanted to catch action in words and keep it shivering, like a pointillist painter." But of the poems, there is also Kenneth Burke's phrase, "fonetty kinglish"; and of the poet, Edmund Wilson's, "hee hee cunnings." As Cummings wrote in "am was. are leaves few this. is these a or": "five/ ideas can swallow a man." Can ten blurbs make a Moby Dick? Cummings is their Jonah.

If only the poetry of E.E. Cummings could be . . . If only the poet E.E. Cummings. . . Will no one say a word against the poems? Will no one type the name with a capital C? The mind reels from so much praise. How it longs for an inequality in the long lineage of praiseprose! If it could but detect a French tuck in "his art is a 'seamless garment' "! The mind is tantalized by a perverse extreme, to exaggerate in dispraise. For instance: the poetry of E.E. Cummings is the work of Archy & Mehitabel in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts from the School of Extra Curricula of Harvard University; or: E.E. Cummings can not spell. If only the poetry of E.E. Cummings, if only the poet E.E. Cummings, could be criticized in the same vein as E.E. Cummings took to task, castigated, pomposity in every form—except its/his own. For there is something that smacks of the aristocratic

JOHN FANDEL *is* Commonweal*'s poetry editor. He has just published a new book of poems,* Body of Earth *(Roth)*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I-am-the-Law-by-god in Cummings' high-handling of the king's democratic English. It is frequently tortured out of recognition, distorted. It often requires a king's leisure to put back in shape again, to reassemble into recognizable form, to make common sense to a king's subject, or an ordinary democrat. A cryptologist is sometimes needed to decipher, or a typesetter to unscramble, it. (If a typesetter of Cummings' curious cryptograms turned critic, or a proofreader, what goodies, one wonders, would either add to the plethora of praise, those stunning phrases?) There are the poems that would baffle a hieroglyphist, if not a hierophant, those I am only too happy a student has occasionally spelled out for me.

It is not that easy to get past the permanent wave in "yoozwidduhpoimnuntwaiv un duhyookuhsumpnruddur/ givusuhtoonunduhphugnting," or that easy to type. And a passage like this, "jeT/ ting lip ssixs ting/ s Wervesca/ rletlycaR v Ingharness/ Of/ curvish(," is bound to put one off; it may even turn one off. "Cummingsese" can work against Cummings. In the first place, the typography of it is forbidding; it creates a barrier for the reader. It says to him either "I dare you to read this," or "You are really too literal to get what I'm getting at." The reader may take the either and may still have to admit the or. He may, that is, have to lump himself in with the "mostpeople" the poems, Cummings said, are not for. In the second place, the typography stops the poem, it impairs the movement of the poem, the fluency. This is all the more a disadvantage considering the immediacy Cummings wanted; simultaneity, ironically, checks, even sacrifices, his cherished "Now," "happening." In the third place, such contortion too easily becomes cleverness: look what I can do; a sort of oneupmanship in typing. It smacks somewhat of the cutesy-wutesy, "hee hee cunnings." In the fourth, fifth, and sixth places, it raises questions: Is individuality simply idiosyncrasy? Is language, so confusing, supposed to be for communication— "fonetty kinglish"? Is this a puzzle or a poem? There are other "places" that can be added to this random list (How does one *pronounce* it?), but however long the list, always in the final place is the first first-of-all question: Is what is being said worth the time and the trouble it takes to figure out?

"two old once upon a no more time men sit look dream"; "chas doesn't sing who instead smiles always a trifle while ironing nobody knows whose shirt"; "a thrown away It with something silvery bright and mysterious A wisp of glory clinging, a thrown away X-mas tree"; "feather rain dreaming field over forest and who could be softer? noone"; "immobile cat fall leaps float tumblish drift whirl fully and away wanders exactly as if nothing had ever happened;" "bee in the only rose unmoving are you asleep"; "this diminutive park is empty, everybody's elsewhere except me 6 english sparrows autumn and the rain the rain the rain": here are seven poems roughly "translated," possibly with errors, (especially in 2, 3, 5, 6), infelicitously, no doubt, from typographics, taken out of parentheses. Poetry is what is lost in translation, indeed; translating Cummings out of "cummingsese" is no exception. Even so literally and roughly reduced, they are pleasant enough, but they do not yield that much for the bother; they do not entice one to polish a deciphering out of cunning kinglish. Only one of the "cummingsese" poems works exquisitely, it seems to me:

l(a

le
af
fa

ll

s)
one
l

iness

"loneliness (a leaf falls)" does not do it justice. This eye-poem says so much of, if nothing else, one-ness, in statement and typography, the meaning would take forty times its four words to convey.

Oneness, the one, the singular, the first person, I/i, the only, the individual, is one of Cummings' favorite themes—practically his unique one. One of his lines clearly declares this recurrent theme and well stands for all in/on one: "there's nothing as something as one"; it has a companion: "we're wonderful one times one." 1 x 1 is one. Along with these, "not/ all matterings of mind/ equal one violet," makes three, one. So singular a selectivity, a kind of index fingerprint autonomy, naturally prefers selfhood in all things—insists on absolute individuation. Lower case i conspicuously emphasizes ego in a language of conventional I. Language, as everything else, has, in effect, to be invented, created anew. Punctuation has to be repointed—repunctuated. Syntax has to serve individuated meaning. Grammar has to be a new set of rules. (Not for Harding; he only blundered: "a simple declarative sentence with seven grammatical/ errors".) Words broken and recombined mean only what "i" makes them mean, in a Humpty-Dumpty sort of logic. Something like this is the reason for something like this: "twi-/ is-Light bird/ ful/ -ly dar/ kness eats// a distance a/ c(h)luck/ (l)ing of just bells (touch)ing/ ?mind// (moon begins The/)/ now,est hills er dream; new/ .oh if// when:// &/ a/ nd O impercept i bl"; though I spoil its integrity of form, shape, by giving it less linear space than it assumes, a single (one) page. Not "all matterings of mind" equal one poem—though the one poem is the "mattering" of one mind? What does it matter if such poems look "like lopsided/imaginations"?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commonweal for Christmas

What do Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and Dorothy Day, Gregory Baum and Eugene J. McCarthy, Rosemary Reuther and Robert Coles have in common? Or such writers on books and letters as Doris Grumbach and Quincy Howe, Gerald Weales and James MacGregor Burns, Saul Maloff and Nora Magid? They are a few of the authors included in last year's *Commonweal* Christmas gift subscriptions. They are indicators of the quality of the writing that this year's Christmas gift subscriptions will provide.

At $14 such a gift is a real bargain, for it saves one-third of the single-copy price. And for additional subscriptions ordered at the same time the Christmas rate is only $11 per subscription.

Order now, pay later

COMMONWEAL 212-MU3-2042
232 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016

Please send *Commonweal* for one year at $14 for the first subscription, $11 for each additional, to:

Name.....
Address.....
City, State, Zip.....
Send gift card to me ☐ for me ☐ Renewal ☐

Name.....
Address.....
City, State, Zip.....
Send gift card to me ☐ for me ☐ Renewal ☐

MY NAME.....
Address.....
City, State, Zip.....
$..... enclosed ☐ Bill me later

($2 per sub. for postage outside U. S. & Canada)
12/7/73

Poetry, Cummings said, "was and is and forever will be strictly and distinctly a question of individuality." His calligrammatic cryptogrammic verse confirms the egocentric, conforms only to eccentricity. But for a poet who played to be anti-idea, that prosy declaration is rather a startler—not, of course, considering what it supported, forms invented to figure it. And yet, for all this, the yardage of Cummings is conservatively, even sentimentally, traditional, right down to his footing. I can find at least five ideas in the poems of him who said "five/ ideas can swallow a man": "Christ (of His mercy infinite)"; "love is the whole and more than all"; "what's beyond logic happens beneath will"; "A world of made/ is not a world of born"; "yes is a pleasant country." Not great ideas? Read them as a sequence. His "nothing really exists" can take on all the philosophers. Cummings claimed first rights on other "ideas," his "non-ideas." He was "hungry for Is for Love Spring thirsty for happens/ only and beautiful." Love, spring, boy and girl (boygirls, girlboys) are his favorite nouns; you, me, priority pronouns. His favorite adverb is Now: he converted it to High Anglican Nounness. Is is his favorite verb: *is*. Moon is his favorite planet; sun, "arriving truly, faithfully who goes," is a standby for the moon: (O). (Although a poet is "who'll... defend/ a sunbeam's architecture with his life.") Dream is an everydaytime event. Heart is—almost nearly—his favorite organ. War is bad. Now who of us would want to take to task so sterling a human being? Not I. Let him type his name low c in heaven Capital H, high C or basso profundo. "All in green went my love riding" (So what if it's a lift?); "in time's a noble mercy of proportion"; "you shall above all things be glad and young"; "may my heart always be open to little/ birds"; "i thank you God for most this amazing/ day." E.E.— e.e.— (hee hee) (he He)— was a man, Edward Estlin. If the poetry of Cummings...

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

SR. MARY ANTHONY WEINIG, SHCJ

NAAMAN'S AMEN

"By the seventh dip in the Jordan, whiter
Than in any other river you have used—"
Promises the prophet, the binder tighter

Of lighter burdens and sweeter yokes than bruised
The stiff necks of the self-sufficient few, of
The doubter, and of the many who refused.

The spot neither prophet's hand nor surgeon's glove
Touches; just the river, and just in the course
Of its regular flowing. Knowledge and love

Come cold and wet without ritual, unhorse
The sulky general and make him splutter
Thanks and praise such as the shackle-free utter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

QUESTIONS, ODDITIES

MICHAEL NOVAK

"Fraternal correction," to use the monastic phrase, is often good for the soul. Thus Peter Steinfels' recent open letter made me recognize in my recent work an error or two. Without becoming too specific, let me express firm purpose of amendment.

But there were also in his letter two or three mistatements of my views; and several items he did not consider with sufficient depth or subtlety.

First, I have never supported, and do not support, Senator Henry Jackson as a candidate for leader of the Democratic party. (Neither do I wholly share the picture of the American electorate or the political strategy of Richard Scammon and Ben Wattenberg, for example, in *The Real Majority*.) I do accept responsibility for helping to launch the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, so that the centrist wing of the Democratic party will have an intellectual base. It was my judgment that a party of high intellectual articulation on the left but weak intellection in the center would not be a healthy party and could not hope to govern well.

The legislative assistants of the Senate have recently named Senator Jackson the "most effective" of all 100 senators. (Senator Javits is, in their view, the "most intelligent," Senator Byrd "the hardest working.") Further, I believe that Senator Jackson's support of Israel and high sense of looming international conflict is, in foreign and military policy, more sensible than his critics admit. My reasons for not supporting him are three: (1) I do not believe he speaks for urban ethnic people or understands their needs; he cannot hope to unite them with blacks in the kind of coalition that Bobby Kennedy tried to build; (2) he, like his state, is too dependent on the interests of Boeing in Seattle; (3) his symbolic conceptions—of American purpose, of military needs, of values—are narrow, derivative, and lacking illumination.

Secondly, Mr. Steinfels has good fun with my use of the word "ethnic." But the fault is in part that of common usage and in part that of his failure to master the field. The word has many senses: anthropological, historical, psychological, and political; an intelligent reader must interpret the word from context to context. *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* establishes definitions to which, I believe, I have been faithful.

Let us here exhibit four of the word's senses: "While anthropologists can identify every human life as *ethnic,* in America a phrase like 'ethnic museum' commonly leads one to black, or Indian, or Spanish-speaking materials, and not to the home of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Recently, however, some whites like Ed Muskie—but why not Nelson Rockefeller?—have been called ethnic. While both Ed Muskie and Barbara Mikulski are Polish, she is *ethnic* in the new way, as he is not." It is quite common to be ethnic in one or more of these senses but not in others; and to be ethnic differently in one's own eyes from the way one appears to others.

Finally, concerning "cowboys" and the "northeastern elite." These are not explanatory concepts. They are images that catch attention, throw some events into relief, suggest arresting perspectives. The economic causes that led to the Civil War are with us still, in new form, and unresolved symbolic conflicts still affect our national life. Here, for example, are some of the things that intrigue me from the heights of the 42nd floor in mid-Manhattan.

In fields of culture and politics, myth and symbol (necessarily) predominate. "Socialism," "the new politics," "Middle America," "the silent majority," "the poor, the young, the blacks and women," "radical," "the affluent society," "the industrial-military complex," "the movement"—what marvelously mythical constructs are these. One does not replace *these* with "definitions." The best we hope for are gradually more accurate myths, more intricate sub-plots. Political analysis, even when fleshed out with statistics and mounds of data, is unavoidably the realm of story, myth, and drama.

So many are the strands of social reality that our best knowledge is itself a form of ignorance. We *must* speak of groups, collectives, classes. Yet every sentence of such speech inadequately describes even a single individual, of whom there are 210 million in these United States. The most incredible myth of all would be that we are nothing but 210 million discrete individuals.

Questions keep arising. Oddities catch our attention.

Does the word "liberal" have a special meaning when applied to eminent Northeastern families: to Rockefellers, Richardsons, Lodges, Lindsays, Coxes, Reids, Bundys? Different, say, from its application to a Kennedy, a Rodino, or even a Humphrey? Are "conservative" established families of the Northeast allowed "liberal" views, and "liberal" established families "conservative" views? (Is Douglas Dillon a "liberal"?) Applied to such families, words like "conservative" or "liberal" feel different. What is the political significance of this difference?

If in the Northeast one is Jewish, or white Southern, or Catholic, how does one get into the circles once dominated by the Brahmin elite, at universities, in the media, on boards of trustees, in the banks and investment houses? When the "Northeastern elite" is enlarged by the entry of outsiders, do cultural changes occur? How much remains the same? *Who* changes most, the newcomers or the old elites?

Why are the national media—especially in news departments—closer in

(Continued on page 278)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

B MINUS

THE SCREEN

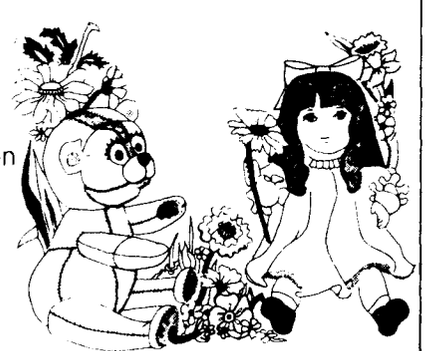
Over the years the B film has gotten harder and harder to identify. Originally it was an action film or a thriller made cheaply for release as a second feature. Since the studio was preoccupied with more costly productions, the B director often enjoyed the freedom of being ignored, and B pictures therefore became an innovative genre. The result was a lot of surprise classics whose durability and artistic merit weren't even recognized until many years after their first release. New resources of expressiveness were discovered for movies by B directors, often out of economic hardship; and when everyone else finally noticed how good those B pictures were, and tried to imitate them, they began to look like avant-garde art—a sort of post-facto avant garde, if that's not a contradiction in terms. Now half the new films released, regardless of budget, are attempts to make new B pictures. But an expensive, pretentious, self-conscious B picture is definitely a contradiction in terms.

The trouble is that history has passed by the B movie, or at least caught up with it. The sort of hero who made the B picture what it was has become as obsolete as the B picture itself is fashionable. This guy was an independent operator toughing out a living in the big city, which was usually his home turf, and somehow keeping his own peculiar ethics intact. But how peripheral a figure that hero has become is demonstrated nowhere more graphically than in Don Siegel's films. Siegel is a genuine B director, perhaps the last of the original breed. He made his reputation with such mid-fifties productions as *Riot in Cell Block 11*, *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Baby Face Nelson*, and his work reached its peak with a 1968 Clint Eastwood vehicle called *Coogan's Bluff*.

Yet *Coogan's Bluff* was a pretty eccentric movie because Siegel's hero had to be injected into the big-city *mise en scène* from rural Arizona, which was apparently the only place Siegel could imagine where a personality like that of his B hero still made sense. Getting his hero from there to where the action is was a rather contrived, tortured feat. But not having broken his back attempting it, Siegel has now tried it again, in reverse, with his new film. This time, instead of having the sheriff come to New York, Siegel has the big-city hoods go out to the boonies. I don't know. Maybe history hasn't overtaken the B picture after all. Maybe the two of them have just passed each other going in opposite directions.

In Siegel's new film, *Charley Varrick*, both the opening and closing sequences are climaxed by automobile chases. And each chase begins when one of the cars involved catapults at full acceleration right into some other car, careening off to proceed on its helter-skelter course. Though these resounding crashes are only a way to announce each chase, they have, as premeditated bits of action, a peculiar quality. From where we sit in the audience, neither collision appears to have been necessary. In fact, in both cases it seems the one car could have gone on its way faster and more safely by swerving around the other. It is almost as if the drivers were unable to resist the opportunity to slam another car, even though avoiding it would have been more expedient. These collisions seem not so much reckless as reckful—purposely intended to cause maximum destruction, as if that were the primary consideration and a question of style which mattered far more than the substantive need to escape.

In neither case is the film's title character, Charley (Walter Mathau), the driver. On the contrary, Charley is the one person in the film for whom this sort of thing is not the style. The car at the end is being driven by a vicious hood called Molly (Joe Don Baker) who is trying to put the hit-and-run on Charley. The car at the beginning is a getaway car driven by Charley's moll with Charley as a passenger. But while the woman driving the first car may be someone Charley loves and the man driving the second someone from whom he

A Gift for the Children
by Pearl S. Buck
is a gift of love you can share

15 warmhearted stories for children of all ages. Illustrated in two colors by Elaine Scull. $8.95
THE JOHN DAY CO.
An Intext Publisher

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instinctively recoils, neither of them is really fit company for Charley. Both are characters apart from Charley himself. For Charley is not so much a lone wolf as a fox trying to survive in a whole pack of wolves—a pack that includes his allies as well as his enemies.

The rough stuff that Molly dispenses throughout the film is unquestionably brutal, but it can hardly be thought of as *more* cold-blooded than the woman's point-blank murder of two state troopers who come snooping around the getaway car. Perhaps it is because he finds himself living in such a world—a world where the good guys and the bad guys are so deservingly matched—that Charley retains his independence from both. He not only betrays Molly into a booby trap at the end, he earlier betrays one of his own accomplices to Molly when the accomplice proves at least potentially untrustworthy. When his girlfriend dies of a wound received in that shoot-out with the troopers, Charley even remains detached enough to be able to blow up her body with the getaway car after he's kissed her goodbye; and by film's end he's sleeping with someone else.

If Charley seems to us even more dispassionate and aloof from other human beings than a predecessor like Bogart's Sam Spade was, it is because the world has changed, not the character. Surviving is harder nowadays and requires a man to be tougher than it used to. All Charley wants is a safe couple of thousand from a little non-Federal-Reserve bank where the F.B.I. has no jurisdiction, but the bank he picks happens to be a Mafia drop with three quarters of a million in it and strings, like Molly, attached. Even out here in the middle of nowhere it has become impossible for a loner like Charley to operate in the old-fashioned way.

Be that as it may, *Charley Varrick* is still a story with a moral. It's the one about the country cousin who teaches his big-city relatives a lesson. (So was *Coogan's Bluff*.) The only trouble with such stories is that they're not true: Charley may be able to outsmart the city slickers in the movie, but in reality Siegel can't quite do the same. Siegel doesn't really have a feel or a flair for rendering the new-fangled characters like Molly and his Mafia bosses. Unlike Charley, Siegel doesn't have a profound enough view of human nature truly to figure out how such characters will behave at every turn. Perhaps this is why both those collisions during the chase scenes seem so avoidable—not finally because of some compulsion they represent in the characters, but due to a certain arbitrariness and ineptness in the direction. Siegel just isn't the man who will produce the surprise classics for our brave, new world.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BOOKS

Critics' Choices for Christmas

CLAIRE HAHN

Reading is my hobby, my vocation, my métier, yet when I'm asked to review the five best books I have read in the past year—books which are not specifically related to my scholarly interest—I'm abashed at my limits. The books I have chosen, therefore, glance askance at my literary preoccupations; I read them because I hoped they might contribute at least obliquely to my search for value in literature.

The Fictional Transfigurations of Jesus by Theodore Ziolkowski (Princeton, $9.50), is a profound and, to me, disturbing study. Ziolkowski analyzes some twenty modern novels which pattern the theme of their contemporary action on the life of Jesus. To the conventions of such novels as Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain* and Barth's *Giles Goat Boy*, Ziolkowski applies the pressure of his scholarship and thesis. What he actually traces in the novels of this century is a growing alienation from a faith in the historical Jesus to complete indifference. Jesus has become a cultural possession for a secular society.

Jesus is "the scholar-critic's Jesus. And that, as Faith might concede to Skepticism, is perhaps the only Jesus we deserve." This book is not just an outstanding work of literary criticism, it is an objective study of a century's diminishing faith in a spiritual real.

For the Christian who trusts that Jesus still lives, the most optimistic and practical plan for putting the Lord's modern house in order is set forth by Richard P. McBrien in *The Remaking of the Church* (Harper and Row, $6.95). Father McBrien's credentials are impeccable: he is professor of theology at Boston College and President of the Catholic Theological Society of America. Nonetheless his book will be controversial. The first section of this study analyzes in theological perspective the problems of the Church before, during, and after the Council. While this was carefully presented, I had a restless sense of having been this way before. But with chapter three begins McBrien's "Agenda for Reform" and his low-key prose is charged with dynamic authority.

His thirteen-point plan for reform is formidable, challenging, and lucid. In section ten, "Women in the Church," McBrien argues with the unswerving direction of an implacable but polite steam roller against the radically unequal position of women in the Church and for their ordination. Point twelve of his agenda deals with "The Ministry of the Ordained" and McBrien urges

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leaders in the Church to prepare the general membership of the whole Church "so that they will easily, and for the right reasons, accept a married clergy."

Not everyone will accept the author's suggestions but they will be hard put to refute his arguments in logical, theologically sound kind. This is the finest book about the problems of the post-conciliar Church that I have read in any year.

Thomas Merton's *Asian Journal* (New Directions, $12.50), is the resonant coda to this Western monk's lifelong quest for the intuitive, contemplative knowledge of the East.

Setting out from the Cistercian Abbey of Gethsemane in Kentucky to give a talk to monastic leaders in Bangkok, Merton jotted down notes along the way. He looks in shock at the madness of Calcutta which he says, "has the lucidity of despair," meets and records his conversations with the Dalai Lama, muses when he descends a Tibetan mountain that, "We are not entangled in our own body but entangled in our own mind."

Merton's journal is full of brilliant vignettes and sensitive insights which are ironically heightened for the reader because of the absurd accident which ended the priest's life. Merton died of accidental electrocution as he stepped from a shower and touched a defective fan. His journey, real and metaphorical, was over and his diary notes often seem prophetic: "I am going home where I have never been in this body, where I have never been in this washable suit. . . ."

Perhaps the most astonishing and, to me, initially repellent book I have read this year is *The Savage God* by A. Alvarez (Random House, $6.50). I rebounded from what I first felt as its despair so positively, returned to the book so often that I must recognize it as a major influence on my thinking for several months.

Alvarez writes with the precision and grace of a poet about a taboo subject. His book is subtitled *A Study of Suicide*. That fiercely creative young poet, Sylvia Plath, who ended her life at the time of her greatest productivity, is the subject of Alvarez's long prologue. The "why" of her death, its meaning in the history of the act of suicide becomes the thematic center of this book. Alvarez's epilogue recounts the details of his own suicide attempt.

And yet the book is not morbid or sick. It is a brave attempt to confront the facts of a society we have created. Alvarez quotes Camus, "There is only one liberty, to come to terms with death. After which everything is possible." *The Savage God* is a poet's attempt through the ordering of his words to face up to the potential for despair in the human condition, and, more, to form for his audience a medium through which they too may stare down pain.

This year's most delightful book is *A Literary Guide to Ireland* by Susan and Thomas Cahill (Scribners, $8.95). I regret that the work was published after my own recent trip to Ireland. So much that I could have discovered, especially in Yeats' country, these sophisticated, articulate, perceptive writers make available in their book.

Even if you don't intend to move far from your armchair, tour Ireland with these exciting authors. They pause to investigate each spot connected with a great Irish writer. One of their longest chapters is called "The Wanderings of Ulysses." In it we move with them through Stephen Daedalus' Dublin from the Martello Tower at Sandycove to Howth demesne whose gardens are so close to recalling the sensuality of Molly Bloom's soliloquy at the end of Joyce's novel.

This book is an exploration of the spirit of place as such artists as Yeats, O'Casey, Synge, Joyce have given it viable form in their writings.

EUGENE C. KENNEDY

What makes any of us aware of ourselves, of our spiritual yearnings and possibilities? Sadly, many of the avowedly spiritual books published in any year are intellectualized exercises, marvelous raw material to be processed diligently by obsessive believers. So too popularized psychology regularly offers *Reader's Digest* style recipes for self-improvement to the emotionally hungry. Writers in contact with human experience, however, acquaint us with ourselves, focusing us on truths that are made harder by their shifting ambiguity. Good books by searching, honest authors always give us back our souls.

Marilyn (Grosset & Dunlap, $19.95) by Norman Mailer comes high on my list of the works that do exactly this. We read it not so much for the facts about Ms. Monroe as for the truth about ourselves. Nobody opens mid-century American life for us like Mailer, nobody else plunges into and explores our basic human experience the way he does, and nobody uses the language in a more exciting way. His concerns are with twentieth century myth-making and the world of stars, athletes, and politicians we create, feed on, and destroy without ever quite understanding what it all means. This is a book about what America made of Marilyn, and one cannot read it without journeying into the world of the spirit that remains sadly unexplored for so many persons.

Men facing the truths about their own lives also help us to discover something richer about our own motivations and ideals. Two such are Malcolm Muggeridge in the first volume of his autobiography, *Chronicles of Wasted Time* (Morrow, $6.95), and Thomas Merton in his posthumous *Asian Journal* (New Directions, $12.50). Muggeridge always manages to be entertaining and provocative, to throw light on the great personalities of his day that is bright enough to reveal something common in all of us. It is the story of a romantic revolutionary who gradually grows disillusioned with Russia and it is good reading all the way. Merton, on the other hand, reveals himself as a man asking profound questions of himself as he set out on the last journey of his life. It is moving to hear him place the questions about his place in the world and to realize that we are left to answer them for ourselves.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Graham Greene has made a career of forcing us to ask good questions about what we believe in and how firmly we understand or grasp the values we claim to live by in life. The characters are familiar in *The Honorary Consul* (Simon & Schuster, $7.95); they are almost old friends to those familiar with Greene's preoccupations about the human situation but they retain the power to make us examine our own lives.

Pick up *The Best of Life* (Time-Life, $19.95) for the faces and events of half the century so far. This is not just nostalgia; the memories are powerfully alive and provide us with the context of our growing up. The book may rest on your coffee table but it will move you deeply if you open yourself to it.

Good reading on *The Devil* (Thomas More, $5.95) by Richard Woods. Since the devil will be much in our consciousness, this is an excellent volume to guide your reflections on evil and its presence—inside and outside of us.

Christians have almost forgotten how to laugh. That is one reason to be grateful for Joel Wells' marvelous *Second Collection* (Thomas More, $8.95) an assemblage of his absolutely unique and refreshing pieces on the antic side of Christendom. Wells has the light and human touch where so many are bitter and heavy-handed. Highly recommended as redemptive humor.

W. C. McWILLIAMS

There ought to be at least something perennial about Christmas books. The holiday, after all, celebrates the only fashionability that really matters, a new birth that is also eternal. This notion makes me more inclined to paperbacks than to hardcover editions, though certainly there are exceptions. Mary Renault's *The Charioteer*, recently reissued by Pantheon ($7.95) is the most sensitive and accurate treatment of homosexuality I know of; modern in setting, it has all the sense for a real issue that one looks for in Renault's historical fiction. (It is also a

Toward an enduring faith

ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY:
Two essays
by Anders Nygren
What is it about Christianity that makes it endure? All religions, says Nygren, share certain characteristics —revelation of the eternal, judgment by the eternal, atonement, and fellowship with the eternal. What is unique about Christianity is precisely the role of Jesus Christ in each of these four areas.

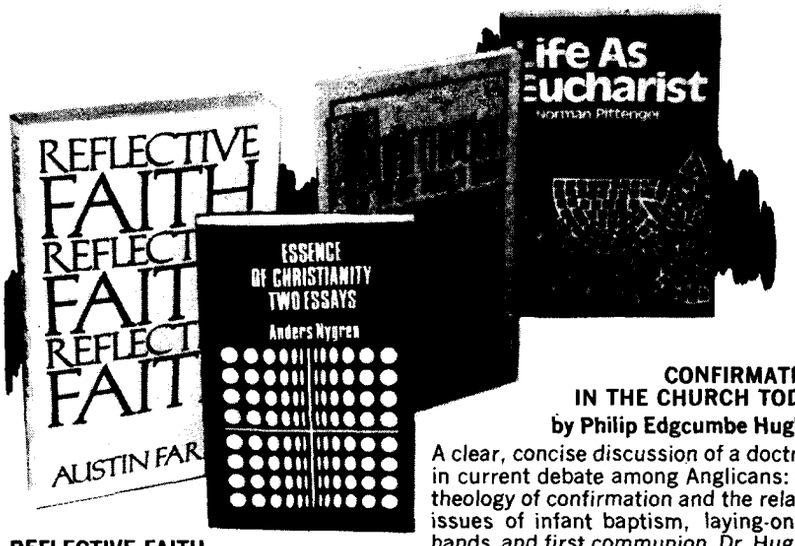
In a second essay, Nygren elaborates on one of the four central themes of Christian religion—atonement. Holding that the atonement is the work of God, he concludes that Christ's death is in the most literal sense vicarious sacrifice and vicarious suffering.

128 pages. Paper, $1.95

LIFE AS EUCHARIST
by Norman Pittenger
A distinguished Anglican author and theologian discusses the Eucharist in an ecumenical spirit, attempting to define especially those points upon which most Christians agree. Pittenger cuts through years of theological disputes about "substances" and "things," and uncovers the essential issue: the Eucharist as it relates to the total life of the Christian—who shares in the community of faith, yet lives in the secular world.

"The theological interpretation," the author concludes, *"is not the essential point, important as it is. The one thing about the Eucharist that ultimately matters is our fellowship in and through it with the Lord Himself, and by Him with our brethren also."*

96 pages. Paper, $1.95



REFLECTIVE FAITH
by Austin Farrer
edited by Charles Conti
REFLECTIVE FAITH traces the evolution of Farrer's thought from its early origins in scholastic theology to his eventual movement toward "the philosophy of action." One of this century's most influential theologians, he is the author of numerous books in the areas of metaphysics and philosophical theology.

"His work is so far removed from the realm of unanalyzed slogans, vague metaphors, and all forms of sloppiness and imprecision, that to read someone of Farrer's stature is to lose any taste for the lower levels of theological writing." **—John Hick**

234 pages. Paper, $3.45

CONFIRMATION IN THE CHURCH TODAY
by Philip Edgcumbe Hughes
A clear, concise discussion of a doctrine in current debate among Anglicans: the theology of confirmation and the related issues of infant baptism, laying-on of hands, and first communion. Dr. Hughes first examines the evidence of the New Testament, and then gives a careful historical survey of the theology of confirmation from Archbishop Cranmer to the present time, presenting and commenting critically on the different theories which have contended for acceptance.

"The rite of confirmation has fallen into a state of utter chaos in the Episcopal Church today as a result of confused thinking and confusing counsels concerning its proper place in the sacramental order of Christian life. I welcome Dr. Hughes' book for the light which it sheds upon the most essential principles of the whole question."

—Carroll E. Simcox, Editor
The Living Church
64 pages. Paper, $1.45

WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. GRAND RAPIDS, MICH. 49503
148

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

useful antidote to her *The Persian Boy*, which is far below her usual standard; admirers should stick to the paperback editions of her earlier books.) Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* (Delacorte, $7.95) is, in many ways, a rerun of his previous books, but they were good to begin with; the book is vintage Vonnegut, well worth having. In a very different mode, Daniel Calhoun's study, *The Intelligence of a People* (Princeton University Press, $12.50), is erudite and rather heavy going, but is an extremely brilliant argument for the thesis that intelligence is a collective product. Calhoun is, incidentally, wise enough to examine the crafts as well as the schools as examples of intelligence in American history.

But the really rich field is in paperbacks. Mark Twain is, justifiably, the hardiest literary flower in American history, and Janet Welt Smith is, I think, his most competent contemporary American student. Her collection, *Mark Twain on Man and Beast* (Lawrence Hill, $3.95) is exceptional. I also admire Jacques Ellul's *The Politics of God and the Politics of Man* (Eerdmans, $3.45) which is extraordinary—even for Ellul. A series of reflections on *Kings*, presented in sermonic form, Ellul's book says more about what matters in politics than any of the supposedly "relevant" treatments to which we have been recently subjected. I would also buy *American Review 17* (Theodore Solotaroff, ed., Bantam Books, $1.95) in order to have John Schaar's essay, "The Case for Patriotism," which speaks in the true voice of statecraft and of the best in the tradition of poilitical theory. The review also has pieces by Malcolm Lowry and Philip Roth that are worth reading and, in general, the good selections are too fine to pass up, though predictably the review also contains a good deal of trash.

Finally, one could do much worse than to buy the paperback edition of John Masters' *The Ravi Lancers* (Pocket Books, $1.50). Masters is one of the premier storytellers of our time and the novel deals with the great dilemmas of British rule in India which established Masters' reputation. It is also a very fine account of the impact and meaning of total war in human affairs, a bit nostalgic and romantic perhaps, but with a fine ring of sincerity and more than a note of truth. Like so many things written today, I doubt that Masters' book was worth what it cost in hardcover, but it has proved to be worth waiting for. And things worth waiting for are, after all, one of the things Christmas is about.

A Religious History of the American People

by Sydney E. Ahlstrom

"... a monumental work, comprehensive and balanced, perceptive and important.... It would be difficult to write a better book." — **American Jewish Historical Quarterly**

"... the longest, most detailed, most polished of the works in its tradition." — **New York Times Book Review**

"... a classic in American religious history" — **National Catholic Reporter**

Winner NATIONAL BOOK AWARD 1973

"A major breakthrough in the study of American religious history.... It belongs in the library of every minister and congregation from Adventist to Zionist." — **Christianity Today**

"It is a model of historical scholarship and also makes for delightful reading. Enthusiastically recommended." — **Commonweal**

"... this reviewer recommends the book unreservedly." — **America**

$19.50 at your bookstore

Yale University Press New Haven and London

JAMES M. MELLARD

The past year provided ample grist for my idiosyncratic mill, unwitting sacrifices to my infernal machine. One concerned Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. *The Vonnegut Statement*, edited by Jerome Klinkowitz and John Somer (Delacorte, $7.95), includes biographical information about Vonnegut, an interview (with Robert Scholes), personal essays in response to the author by Dan Wakefield and critic Joe David Bellamy, hip new journalistic criticism/reportage by San Francisco's Jess Ritter, and more conventional essays on individual works and the *oeuvre* by Klinkowitz, Glenn Meeter, Somer and others (including one of my own). Vonnegut made it in the most unlikely of ways: he rose from paperback, underground popularity to national acclaim. He did it on the strength of popular, ironically affirmative themes and an accessible style. *The Vonnegut Statement*, with its range of materials and its bibliography, makes the breadth and depth of a deceptively simple writer available to even more readers.

Another, *Breakfast of Champions* (Delacorte, $7.95), is by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. This novel is one "experimental," "innovative" fiction that is beyond the reach of very few. One gets the feeling that books by Barth, or Borges or Nabokov are all elitist fiction unavailable to a popular, mass audience. One gets the feeling, too, that experimental novels must be difficult. *Breakfast of*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Champions suggests that some authors can communicate with large audiences even through disjunctive or unconventional forms. Vonnegut's novel has little conventional plot, its unit is the brief paragraph and the cartoon drawing (by the author), and its characters are as flat as those figures in the cartoon creations, and yet the basic, affirmative humanism of Vonnegut (who is drawn into his work as a character, too) remains always clear, especially when he sets free his characters to live on their own outside his imagination. His method is that of the joke, he has said, and the biggest joke of all seems to be on those *outré* experimentalists who claim so much smaller an audience than he does.

Other books have been drawn into another part of my mill. For some years now—since I went through college on an athletic grant—I have been interested in the role of sport and the sports hero in American life. Once upon a time Americans revered their war heroes, but the most recent war remained too ambiguous for clear-cut heroes to emerge. In the absence of warrior heroes we have often turned to movie heroes and heroines, but we usually understand that their exploits remain fictions, parts of imaginative worlds only. Sports heroes seem less ambiguous to us now than either warriors or movie stars. At least they *do* things; many Americans value, for good reasons or ill, what they are able to do; and the things done sometimes are genuinely dangerous, thus creating the potential for heroism. But clearly the confluence of sport and the national ideals is more complex than this, so my machine is grinding away now on the following texts that may yet contribute to a fuller undersanding of the topic:

Heroes must be debunked as well as worshipped. *Meat on the Hoof* (St. Martin's, $7.95), by Gary Shaw, a former football star at the University of Texas, offers a sensitive insider's view of the psychological dimensions of football at a major "factory," of getting the psyche up, of the process by which Saturday's heroes are made. *The Bingo*

ORBIS BOOKS

for Christmas Giving

Pilgrimage to Now/Here
by Frederick Franck

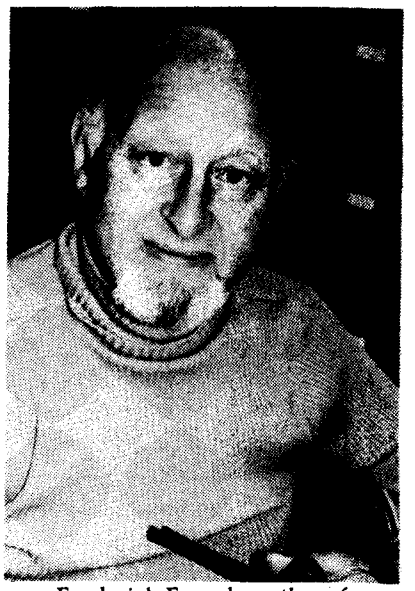
Frederick Franck is an artist whose drawings and paintings are in the collections of over twenty museums in America, Europe and Japan. His drawings have been featured in *Fortune, Harpers, Atlantic, New Yorker, Commonweal,* and *Worldview. In Pilgrimage to Now/Here,* Franck depicts his search for what Christ and Buddha still have to say to modern man. His pilgrimage led him through Rome, India, Ceylon and Japan, where he talked to people of every level, including the Dalai Lama. This book is a welcome antidote to both the supercerebral and the "Zen is fun" presentations of Christianity-Buddhism within recent years. *18 original line drawings by author.*

Hardbound $6.95
Paperback $3.95

TWO PICTURE BOOKS
by Mary Phelan
ABC of Celebration
ABC of the City of Man

ABC of Celebration is about the simple, but profound, events of living and growing that children experience. This book celebrates them in the form of the alphabet, because that is a familiar learning tool to children. For each letter there is a photo to help children understand some very human, but abstract, concepts, such *as discovery, kindness* and *wonder,* and to give the child an awareness of a larger family of people beyond his own culture. *ABC of the City of Man,* also using the alphabet as a guide with 26 stunning photos, presents beginning concepts of how people form their communities.

Each volume, *Paperback $2.95*



Frederick Franck, *author of Pilgrimage to Now/Here*

Skelly the Sea Horse
by Marilyn Brokamp

Skelly is a combination of reading skills, science and art. Pictures for Skelly were drawn by pupils of St. Mary's in Bloomington, Illinois and each is the child's interpretation of the text. *Skelly* and its adventure in this *wonderful world of water* will also appeal to younger children who like to be read to. *Skelly the Sea Horse* is 32 beautifully illustrated, delightful pages.

Permaboard $2.95

Rebuilding the Temple: Tradition and Change in Modern Asia
by Ralph Buultjens

Buultjens has written widely on Buddhist philosophy, Asian history and international finance. This book is an overview of Asia which treats of its living heritage, its discovery of new values, and its possible futures. Written in a very readable fashion for those who share the author's conviction that the problems of humanity are global and that we can survive as a species only if we try to understand what motivates others who share the only planet any of us has.

Hardbound $7.95, Paperback $3.95

At your local bookstore or write to: ORBIS BOOKS, Maryknoll, NY 10545

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings (Harper and Row, $6.95), by William Brashler, suggests that a minority's heroes must also be acknowledged if we are ever to know it. Brashler's novel is about black baseball leagues and barnstorming during the years just before World War II and Jackie Robinson's breaking the color line in organized lily-white ball. It may appeal to the national conscience concerning race, but it certainly appeals to that myth-making faculty in us that focuses on sport. Philip Roth's *The Great American Novel* (Harper and Row, $8.95) adds one more dimension to the myth-making. In the tradition of Ring Lardner, Mark Harris (whose fine *Bang the Drum Slowly* reemerged this year), Bernard Malamud, and especially Robert Coover, Roth uses baseball as a metaphor for writing itself. But it cannot answer the question about sport and popular, as well as serious literature, and values we might ask. So the mill grinds on, though I think it may reject this year's crop.

WOMEN PRIESTS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?
A Theological-Historical Investigation

Haye van der Meer, SJ
Translated and with a Foreword and Afterword by
Arlene and Leonard Swidler

The issue of women priests raises questions in and outside the Church with far-reaching implications for women's position in society. Considering all basic objections to the ordination of women raised by all Christian churches, this fully documented work demands an open reexamination of the question and stands as the major Catholic study on the subject. $10.00

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Philadelphia, Pa. 19122

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

In one of a series of articles called "Brooklyniana," published in the Brooklyn *Standard* in 1861-1862, Walt Whitman wrote: "The whole spirit of a floating and changing population like ours is antagonistic to the recording and preserving of what traditions we have of the American Past . . . there will come a time, here in Brooklyn, and all over America, when nothing will be of more interest than authentic reminiscences of the past."

This seems particularly true this year when a nation less than two years away from its bicentennial celebration is asking itself a few hard questions about just what it should celebrate—specifically what events, myths, values and "reminiscences" in its past are most "authentic."

We might start by ordering "A Syllabus and Study Guide to the American Revolution," plus a kit ($7) complete with posters and the attention-getting, bold, gold DON'T TREAD ON ME Button, with its coiled snake, from the Peoples Bicentennial Commission, Washington, D.C. 20036. It is a way of reminding ourselves that we need not be the kind of people it sometimes seems we are becoming—apathetic, conformist, comfort-drugged citizens of a future Rebozoland.

A lot of us will give or receive Alistair Cook's *America* (Alfred A. Knopf, $15) this year; and it should be read with a cold eye. We can hear his voice as we read along—crisp, aloof yet affectionate—his prose smooth, his narrative substance familiar and anecdotal. Unlike more tradition-oriented peoples we have always needed foreign observers—from Crevecoeur and De-Tocqueville, to Dickens, to Cooke's friend and mentor Denis Brogan, to Nikita Khruschev and, three years ago, Ronald Segal in the excellent, *The Americans* (Bantam, $1.25)—to explain us to ourselves. Cooke writes as if he were explaining us to his English countrymen with a deceptively simple style that captures the best richness of his own and the American spirit: "The winds whistled and the food gave out and the fields stank with death and disease, and Washington's life simplified itself into one hard principle—duty."

His last chapter juxtaposes the paradoxically complementary images of Hoover Dam, the symbol of the New Deal's "industrial democracy" which made this Southwest blossom and its ugly spawn—Las Vegas, "Everyone's cut-rate Babylon." Our characteristic lust for the More Abundant Life, Cooke warns, may destroy our perception of the good life. Ironically, the same criticism might be leveled against the producers of this lush, generally reassuring book which has both the virtues and vices of its mother—TV. Its illustrations are often poorly identified, bright to the point of gaudiness, and much too familiar. A good history should give us a few surprises—even shocks.

A more magnificent volume, *American Civilization*, edited by Daniel J. Boorstin (McGraw-Hill, $35) appeared at this time last year and never—as far as I know—received the attention and distribution it deserved—probably because of its impossible price. It is one of the most beautiful books I have seen. Boorstin calls the work a *portrait* because his thirteen distinguished authors—including Nathan Glazer, Martin E. Marty, R. W. B. Lewis, Harold Rosenberg and Ernest R. May—have been asked to offer a "subtle likeness" of our life. The book has been organized thematically with each essay analyzing a contemporary issue in an interdisciplinary-historical perspective, with cross references to other parts of the book.

The illustrations are not mere decoration—as in Cooke—but essays in themselves, each sketch (Ben Shahn is prominent), photo, painting or poster carefully selected and positioned to comment on the text and its companions. So it is good to be able to read Lewis' analysis of Hart Crane's Whitman-inspired attempt to convert the technological triumph of the Brooklyn Bridge into a spiritual experience and then turn to reproductions of both Joseph Stella's 1922 painting, "The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bridge" and Charles Demuth's "I Saw the Figure Five in Gold" painting based on a William Carlos Williams poem.

Walt Whitman would have cherished the photographs of Alfred Stieglitz. They give a "subtle likeness," like the texture of Thomas Eakins' portrait of old Walt himself. In *Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer* (Random House, $35), Dorothy Norman has gathered these dusky, lovely and powerful pastel-toned pictures of the turning century: artists John Marin, Charles Demuth; writers Sherwood Anderson, Waldo Frank; the classic "The Steerage, 1907"; above all the incomparable portraits of snowy New York streets, steam rising from sweaty horse bodies and the old rag-picker over the wooden curb barrel, 1893.

Much of the text is in Stieglitz' own words, based on Ms. Norman's notes, summed up in his 1922 statement: "I was born in Hoboken. I am an American. Photography is my passion. The search for Truth my obsession." Because of Stieglitz the question posed by *MSS* magazine in 1922—"Can a photograph have the significance of art?"—need never again be asked.

Alistair Cooke will not be forgiven for not mentioning the Brooklyn Bridge. It is our Arch of Triumph, our Colosseum. To the men who built it it was Brooklyn's answer to the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, a speculator's scheme to raise the value of Brooklyn real estate, the culminating symbol of the Age of Progress. It is now one of the last authentic links with a New York that will soon be gone. David McCullough's history of its construction, *The Great Bridge* (Simon and Schuster, $10.95)—starring Henry C. Murphy, father of Brooklyn and founder of the Brooklyn *Eagle;* scrappy *Eagle* editor Thomas Kinsella; and the courageous invalid engineer Washington Roebling—is one of the best books of this or any other year. It recreates the time when the *city* of Brooklyn, now a neglected borough, was a justly proud community. The only experience that approaches the thrill of reading it is a walk across the Bridge itself under the stars on a cool gusty night.

RICHARD C. WADE

Christmas, 1973, comes at the end of one of the most turbulent years of American history. No one could have predicted a year ago that the Vice President would resign in disgrace, that there would be a serious interest in impeaching the President, that the nation would be discussing the rationing of gasoline and heating fuel, or that American troops would be put on a general alert during a Mid-East war. These events have tumbled on the American people so suddenly that not many authors have not had the time to assess these developments in print.

Yet certain books dealing with the public affairs of our time deserve attention for the Christmas list. Arthur Schlesinger's *The Imperial Presidency* (Houghton Mifflin, $10) does more than provide a convenient historical discussion of the question of impeachment, which is evanescent; more importantly

PARISH EDUCATION:
TWO PROBLEMS...

Our solutions can be your program!

Morality... What can you say about that? With every rule, tradition, and code under scrutiny, parents and educators everywhere ask, "Are there any value guidelines left?"
... So we took Dr. Lawrence Kholberg's (Professor of Education and Social Psychology) study on this very problem, and, with Gerard Pottebaum, created a media Kit about morality and the stages of moral development. HOW MORAL AM I? ... designed for high school students, college classes, parents, and adult education groups. It will help you and others to understand morality today. And that's not bad.

HOW MORAL AM I?... filmstrips, sound tracks, Guides ... a complete media Kit.

The Church... Religious educators are being asked, "Where is it now, and where is it going?" The confident and contemporary teacher has meaningful answers, but how do you form such teachers?
... We've made that task a little easier. Reverend Frank Murphy, Ph.D., (Superintendent of Schools, Washington, D.C.) has created a Kit which combines Post-Vatican II theological insights with sound educational psychology. It's a training Kit designed especially for the on-going instruction of religious educators, as well as the clergy, religious, and all other concerned Christians. THE CHURCH TODAY; it's as contemporary as it sounds.

THE CHURCH TODAY... cassette tapes, Guides, student-teacher workbooks ... a complete media Kit.

WRITE TO US.....

W.H. Sadlier, Inc.
new york • chicago
los angeles

Name_____
Diocese_____
Parish_____
Address_____
City_____ State_____ Zip_____

5566-9 ..... How Moral Am I? 18.00
5515-4 ..... The Church Today 49.95

William H. Sadlier, Inc.
11 Park Place
New York, New York 10007

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it is a penetrating analysis of the permanent problem of the balance of power among the branches of our national government and the constitutional and informal checks on Presidential power. Writing with his usual felicity and authority, Mr. Schlesinger sees the present crisis rooted in historical forces that go back to the beginning of the century. To be sure, Nixon is not spared, but readers would be mistaken if they consider this volume as a mere, albeit brilliant, polemic.

Throughout his Watergate troubles President Nixon has continually referred to his "mandate" of 1972. Several books this year deal with that election. Since the Committee to Re-elect the President kept Nixon virtually under house arrest during the campaign, the attention necessarily centers on Senator George McGovern and his ill-starred effort. Indeed, never have so many words been written about so few voters. Most of these books are ephemeral and will have no lasting importance. Two, however, achieve a special distinction. *The Boys on the Bus* (Random House, $7.95) by Timothy Crouse is an extraordinary study of the journalists who covered the Democratic campaign. It examines the impact of the logistics of the candidates' schedule on the reporting and interpreting of events and the interaction of the reporters as they travel together across the country for ninety days. Crouse is a rookie covering his first national campaign but he is a remarkably shrewd and mature observer. Moreover, he demonstrates the highest historical skills when he compares 1972 with the earlier coverage of Presidential elections.

Richard A. Dougherty's *Goodbye, Mr. Christian* (Doubleday, $7.95) is a very special piece. It is a memoir of the man who became George McGovern's press secretary and later a close friend. Told with wit and warmth, it is the best examination yet of the personality and character of the candidate. Though written with affection, it is by no means adulatory. McGovern's mistakes are revealed in full dimension, carefully explained, but not explained away. And the selfish squabbling among the staff that became notorious by Labor Day is deliciously described while barely keeping the author just this side of the libel law.

Two biographies appearing this year have a particular relevance to the serious reader. Adam Ulam's *Stalin* (Scribners, $10.95) reminds a country entranced with *détente* why it was Russia and the West found it so hard to co-exist two decades ago. Drawing on new material, it is easily the best account of a man who dominated the world stage for nearly a quarter century. And *American Heroine, The Life and Legend of Jane Addams* (Oxford, $10.95) by Allen Davis provides a new insight into the most remarkable Americans of her time. In this year of the woman, Davis demonstrates that it is still possible for a man to write about feminism with sensitivity and detachment. He carefully rebuilds a plausible interpretation of a very complicated person, and recovers an historical figure who belongs to all of us of both sexes.

daniel berrigan

prison poems

"In style, tone, imagery, idiom and insight, these three-score poems convey a toughened singleness of vision that is no less religious, even mystical, for all its resort to a blunt, sardonic vernacular . . .Berrigan moves in close to 'whiff the cup' of prison life; his glimpses of brother prisoners are moving, his message is *hang on.*"

Publishers Weekly

". . .These poems, born of the grief and glory of prison life, are doorways to a great spirit."

Philip Berrigan

$5.95 unicorn press
P. O. Box 3307
Greensboro, N.C. 27402

GERALD WEALES

This has been such a strange and busy year that I cannot remember having time to read anything simply for fun except other people's mail. Still, in the course of my duties, academic and journalistic, I have run into a number of books that are pleasures in their own right. Let me begin with two volumes, both called *Letters of Anton Chekhov,* one edited by Avrahm Yarmolinski (Viking, $12.50), the other by Simon Karlinsky (Harper & Row, $17.50). The latter is the better of the two because it prints letters uncut and it provides extensive commentary by the editor which helps place the letters in their original intellectual context. Still, both books offer the clear, cool voice of Chekhov, lucid and wise even in pain and boredom, and that is a voice I am always ready to hear.

As background to my teaching of African drama, I turned to *Peoples and Cultures of Africa* (published by Doubleday for the American Museum of Natural History, $12.50) in search of particular information. I cannot pretend to have read the book in its entirety, but I do know that every time I went to it for something specific, I got lost among the essays that Elliott P. Swinner has collected, found myself reading about cattle-raising among the Pakot (by Harold K. Schneider) when I had intended to concentrate on Yoruban cosmology (by Peter Morton-Williams). A solid scholarly work that is a good browse. Another book about Africa, one of quite a different character, is Wole Soyinka's sometimes painful, sometimes lovely *The Man Died* (Harper & Row, $8.95), his prison notes from his incarceration during the Nigerian Civil War.

Quentin Bell's *Virginia Woolf* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $12.50) is fascinating because the lady is and because her nephew had access to more material than most Woolf biographers do. Graham Greene's *Collected Stories* (Viking, $10.) is a welcome book not because the stories are all that fine (some are bad, as a matter of fact),

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but because a few of them are old friends, a few of them are very good and all of them, even the bad ones, are evidence that Greene is still one of the best English writers around.

Wait! Let me take back that opening sentence. There was no ulterior motive involved in my pleasure in *Sculpture/ Inuit,* the handsome volume the University of Toronto Press published for the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council. Of course, it is not really a 1973 book, but it got to me in 1973 when the marvelous show which gave rise to it came to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

MARGARET WIMSATT

One of the nicest books to come along in 1973 or any other year is David Cecil's *The Cecils of Hatfield House* (Houghton Mifflin, $12.95 through December 31, then $15.). It comes very near to being a fairy tale; it fulfills Alice's demands for pictures and conversation; it has lots of personalities, and it's not quite real. Anybody who admires England's old systems, her traditions, tarnishing, but somehow always getting polished again, will address this book with much pleasure. Lord David has lived with his ancestors, from Elizabeth I's great Lord Burghley down to his own aunts and uncles, and presents his long English tale with modesty and delight. The price for such a book these days, so lavishly and elegantly illustrated, is almost as otherworldly.

Equally surprising (because who nowadays expects much life from that old genre, *Festschrift*?) is a book called: *I. A. Richards: Essays in His Honor* (Oxford University Press, $12.50). Richards, teacher, literary critic, world traveller, mountaineer, does not fit any precise slot. He is very much alive. It is appropriate that his friends should have put together so challenging a volume. The editors Reuben Brower, Helen Vendler, and John Hollander have worked well, but in a sense they were harvesting; we are all in debt to Ivor Winters, the man who taught the teachers, whether or not we know it. Poems by R. P. Warren, Richard Eberhart, Robert Lowell, and Hollander himself—essays, very diverse, from Basil Willey, L. C. Knights, B. F. Skinner, many more—and, rounding off the book and a life, one by Janet Adam Smith about Richards and his wife Dorothea on scarp and peak—form a shapely monument to the man who has changed the meaning of the adjective: Ricardian.

Shakespeare again? And a whole book about one play? Janet Adelman has written this one to demonstrate his splendor and complexity: *The Common Liar: An Essay on Anthony and Cleopatra* (Yale University Press, $8.75). In this particular play Shakespeare found original sin and sin less original, dynastic concerns (not irrelevant today), introspection, common faults embodied in people so placed as to be uncommon. The "infinite variety" of one book is here set forth so as to illuminate all literary experience. Readers who are suspicious of footnotes should try Ms. Adelman's, entire. They are a whole other world that might not otherwise come even to half-light, the ordered overflowing of a lively mind. This book is all an academic book should be: thoughtful, original, wise.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

REVIEWERS

CLAIRE HAHN is an assistant professor of English at Fordham University.

FATHER EUGENE C. KENNEDY, M.M., psychologist-author, wrote *The New Sexuality.*

WILSON CAREY MCWILLIAMS is the author of *The Idea of Fraternity in America.*

JAMES M. MELLARD, an English professor at Northern Illinois University, wrote *Four Modes: A Rhetoric of Modern Fiction.*

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J., is associate editor of *Commonweal.*

RICHARD C. WADE is a professor of history at the Graduate Center of City University in New York.

GERALD WEALES, reviewer and drama critic, is the author of *Clifford Odets.*

MARGARET WIMSATT is a writer who lives in New Haven, Connecticut.

THREE BOOKS ON PRAYER from MOREHOUSE-BARLOW

The treasures of the great spiritual classics . . .

ASKING THE FATHERS

The Rev. Father Aelred Squire, O.P.

ASKING THE FATHERS aims to help those people who are in need of an overall view of life consistent with the practice of meditation and prayer. It seeks to broaden the interest in things of the spirit of those, especially the young, who are out of touch with organized Christianity. And it offers—for *all* readers—the treasures of the great spiritual classics of the Christian Church.

$6.20 *postpaid*

An Encouragement to Pray . . .

DAY BY DAY

The Rev. Michael Hollings

To those who have said: "Teach us to pray," Michael Hollings offers DAY BY DAY.

Why I Pray, Relationship with God, the Mechanics of Prayer, Petition and Intercession, Meditation — these are among the many pertinent subjects thoroughly discussed in Father Hollings' insightful, instructive, and extremely helpful new book on prayer.

(paperbound) $2.20 *postpaid*

A Book of Prayer . . .

THE ONE WHO LISTENS

Edited by The Rev. Michael Hollings and Etta Gullick

THE ONE WHO LISTENS is both a handbook on prayer *and* a collection of prayers. The editors offer penetrating, concise, informative teaching about Prayer itself, and then provide over 300 prayers drawn from the writings of the world's outstanding believers.

(paperbound) $3.00 *postpaid*

Please send check with order to

MOREHOUSE-BARLOW

14 East 41st Street

New York 10017

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Integrated Housing as an Investment

GOAL: To make quality housing available to ALL people!

Join us in a tax-sheltered limited partnership. Send NOW for free prospectus!!

James Farmer and Morris Milgram
PARTNERS IN HOUSING—Dept CW
8702 Crispin St., Phila., PA 19136

Name .....

Address .....

State ..... Zip .....

This is not an offer to sell these securities. The offering is made only by the Prospectus.

PEACE CORPS & VISTA NEED YOU! Volunteer your skills & experience in developing nations overseas and U.S. Join the universal struggle for human dignity—through education, skilled trades, agriculture, engineering, business, urban planning, medicine & other fields of community development. One or two years. Expenses paid—medical, travel, vacation, living. Information: Bruce Mazzie, ACTION, OCP Box P-5, Washington, D.C. 20525.

Classified

RATES: 50c a word, one time; 48c, three times; 45c, seven times; 42c, thirteen times. Twelve words minimum. For box numbers add 50c per insertion. Classified payable with order; monthly in advance for more than three times. COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Printing

PRINT YOUR BOOK from typed manuscript, camera-ready. Economical. BIOGRAPHY PRESS, Rt. 1, Box 745, Aransas Pass, Texas 78336.

Alaska

ESKIMO HANDCRAFTS: Baskets, Ivory Carvings, Masks, Tools. TOKSOOK BAY ARTS & CRAFTS COOPERATIVE, Toksook Bay, Alaska 99637.

Vacations

TIRED of high vacation costs? Live rent free where you choose. Write VIKING HOME EXCHANGE, Box 3007, St. Paul, Minn. 55165.

Dreams

DREAMS AND INNER SPACES. Fascinating, practical monthly on dreams, creativity, meditation, mystical states. Free copy. Box 1116P, COMMONWEAL.

Guinea Bissau

SUPPORT the campaign for U.S. recognition of The Republic of Guinea Bissau, now struggling for independence from Portugal in northwest Africa. Inquire: Committee to Support the Republic of Guinea Bissau, 164 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

If anybody would like to try some legible, comprehensible verse, I suggest they read Judith Kroll's *In the Temperature Zone* (Scribner's, $5.95). A New York girl first understands, stands under, sees under, "New York" culture (some imitations here, some lively parody) then transfers her vision to exotic places and ways. The perceptive section called "A Walk in India" could not have been walked unless she had sharpened her wits at home, right home, or on decaying New York Central trains.

An essay should end with homage; it is a pleasure to pay tribute to a great maker. Edward Mendelson has done this in selecting the pieces for W. H. Auden's *Forewords and Afterwords* (Faber, £3.95). Book reviews, prefaces—passing pieces they must have seemed to the writer—but reading as well as ever today. Shakespeare, Goethe, Kierkegaard—but also migraine and cooking, as discussed by Oliver Sacks and M. F. K. Fisher; whatever Auden wrote about he illumined. He understood and respected the word, whatever it was saying. May his soul rest in pleasant peace.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Michael Novak (Cont.)

style to Northwestern WASP than to any of our many other sub-cultures? How do they manage to "assimilate" (even deracinate) those liberal Jews, white Southerners, midwestern commentators, and others who enter into them?

National political power depends not solely on money but also on the definition given to the issues by the national media (specifically, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, CBS, NBC, and—to a lesser extent—ABC). Is it odd, then, that the popular symbol for the Northeastern elite is no longer Wall Street but, rather, the national media? (The Goldwater convention of 1964. Send "them" a message.)

If the major economic struggle (on a remote but illuminating level) is between "cowboys" and "patriots" (Dumhoff), then how can a candidate like George McGovern, who can hold the support of neither, be surprised when he is abandoned to the cold?

The Kennedys have wealth, education, and power; and they live in the Northeast. Why, then, is it problematic —to Peter Steinfels, to George Wallace, to certain Boston families—where to place Ted Kennedy in relationship to the Northeastern elite? Why can Kennedy move into and out of that symbol, partly fitting it, partly not, as it suits him—or others?

Can some who live in California also belong to the Northeastern elite, symbolically? (In their own perception and in that of others?)

Why is it that Northeasterners of eminent families are given wide moral latitude to be pragmatic, to compromise, and to be implicated in great evils, without losing the aura of "integrity"? Men from other cultures are given far less room for error. Is Elliot Richardson less a pragmatist than, say, Hubert Humphrey? (Recent *New York Post* headline: "WHEN HE LOSES, COX STILL WINS." Interesting.)

Are McGeorge Bundy (Democrat) and Nelson Rockefeller (Republican) part of the same elite? Do they have dinner together? Does that elite have two (or more) branches? Are wealthy Northeastern Jews "in"? Is there more than one Northeastern elite? (In one sense, yes; in another, no?)

Suppose that Robert Strauss were from New York rather than from Texas. Does the fact that he's a "cowboy" contribute anything to his problem with one wing of the party?

The AFL-CIO leadership was officially neutral in 1972. Did it feel that workers' interests were unrepresented both by Nixon and by McGovernites? Is there, indeed, a "third force" groping somewhere in the dark? Symbolically represented neither by cowboys, nor by patriots, nor by the AFL-CIO?

The New Yorker, citadel of Conciousness I, published "Consciousness III." Is it odd that the AFL-CIO should see certain connections between its traditional enemies of the Republican Northeast (Wall Street, Big Business)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and its new enemies of the Democratic Northeast (radical chic)?

"Republican and "Democratic" have an odd ring when applied to the *New York Times*. Is the *Times* a Republican newspaper? It isn't the voice of the AFL-CIO.

A fight between the AFL-CIO and the "new politics" (Rick Sterns? or Joe Duffey? Jean Westwood? or Ann Wexler?) may be somehow irrelevant to the main power struggle in the United States. Neither the AFL-CIO *nor* the "new politics" is strong enough to play spoiler to the other. Thus the present struggle in the Democratic party is a sub-plot. (Is Al Barkan as good a spokesman for urban ethnics as Barbara Mikulski? The struggle of Barbara to represent *both* wings of the party may be the most significant of all; and Steinfels ignores it.)

In what categories go Hubert Humphrey, Scoop Jackson, Eugene McCarthy, and George McGovern? They are neither "patriots" nor "cowboys." And they have, recently, been losers.

The American Jewish Congress has a historic preference for the Northeastern elite, in part because of the latter's attachment to civil rights. But Nixon vs. McGovern raised new anxieties.

After I wrote my column on the Northeastern elite, Archibald Cox executed a powerful symbolic action—traditional, moral, perhaps heroic—in a press conference as hokey as hasty pudding. (It had what Anthony Lewis recognized as "character;" it had—sometimes we thank God for it—the good side of Yankee ethnicity.) Elliot Richardson set himself up for 1976 or 1980, now being able to claim both loyalty to Nixon *and* moral character. Nixon fired a "patriot" and hired a "cowboy" (Leon Jaworsky of Houston) as special prosecutor.

There are other fascinating aspects of the symbolic worlds in which we have our being:

That Scotch-Irish Protestants are among the least prosperous of all the white ethnics, and among the most alienated.

That "alienation" is a cultural malaise, and differs in character in each ethnic culture. Pat Caddell's theory of general alienation, supplied to McGovern, was not sufficiently nuanced.

That *urban* ethnics (meaning now the Southern and East European Catholics, along with the Irish, who live *in* the major cities) burn with slow anger about their position in American society; while the *suburban* ethnics (including the one in three Westchester residents who are foreign-born or the children of immigrants) share with their urban brethren many traditional instincts and perceptions. (Newcomers tend to be highly educated, secure in their cultural identity, more politically sophisticated.) These feelings are politically powerful and capable of fueling a great surge of progressive politics. The historical direction of ethnic (Southern and Eastern European) voters is progressive. Despite the culture shock he came to generate, McGovern held 48 percent of the Catholic vote, only 38 percent of the national vote.

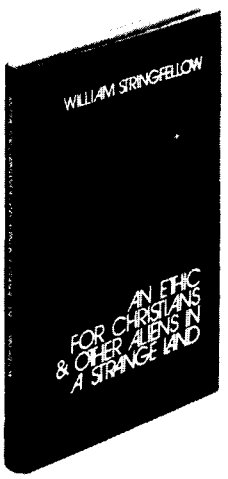
The main fount of political conservatism in the United States is not Catholic. It is not the Catholic blue-collar worker, nor the Catholic white-collar worker; not the urban ethnic nor the suburban ethnic. The main source of conservative politics in the United States is Protestant (in 1972, 68 per cent for Nixon). The two main centers of economic and political power are also mainly Protestant.

Yet *midwestern* Protestants are not quite "cowboys," and not quite "patriots" either; and their ethnic traditions are rather parallel to those of their Catholic neighbors.

In my view (to state it once again) the key to the future progressive coalition is to be found among urban Italians, Slavs, and other Catholics. Create wise programs that win the allegiance of that group, and the circles of political potency will ripple out to the suburbs and to other ethnic groups. That group is up for grabs. Its historical experiences in the United States make it receptive to progressive symbols, if these symbols include them.

Keep your eye, for now, on Barbara Mikulski.

If you've had your fill of morally retarded men



If you're troubled by signs of tarnish on the America you thought you knew

You may be ready for
AN ETHIC FOR CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ALIENS IN A STRANGE LAND

by William Stringfellow

author of MY PEOPLE IS THE ENEMY and A PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FAITH.

An awe-inspiring, biting look at what is happening right now in America, by this prophet of the '70s.

A disturbing parallel between the fallenness of our nation and the Babylon of the Book of Revelation.

A thundering indictment—
Yet . . . in the midst of it all, a message of lively hope.

A TIMELY BOOK THAT MAY WELL BE THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK YOU WILL READ THIS YEAR.

At your bookstore

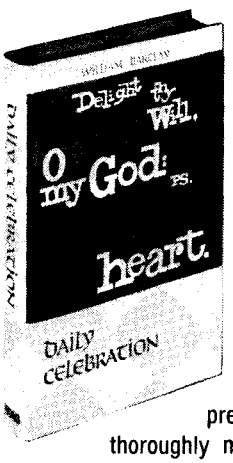
$5.95

WORD books
Publisher, Waco, Texas

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FRESH BREATH for TIRED DEVOTIONAL TIMES

For those who long for quiet pastures — yet find only mounting pressures and the clanging, pushing, shoving of a busy world.



DAILY CELEBRATION

William Barclay

365 reflective readings that probe everyday situations. From out of his lifetime as a biblical scholar and universally-acclaimed preacher, Dr. Barclay talks about a thoroughly modern lifestyle . . . shaped by a deepening faith. He deals with intolerance, greed, woe, loss of faith, marital problems, financial stress and much, much more. DAILY CELEBRATION offers biblical insight in practical, probing applications to life. Here, too, is an infectious kind of hope, honesty and openness waiting to be caught by the growing Christian.

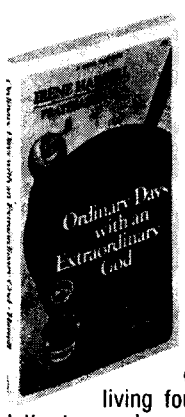
$4.95 Hardbound

Today Is Yours

Edited by Sallie Chesham

Quiet, but real ways to give each day back to God — and find that it is more than ever yours. The 77 contributors to this warm devotional guide write out of joy, pain, depression, disappointment, friendship, exhilaration, glory — the entire gamut of human emotions. And all find — and share — God's love and care. All are ordinary people. From all walks of life. And all are, for editor Sallie Chesham, part of "a beloved family of shining people." TODAY IS YOURS.

$3.50 Hardbound $1.95 Paperback

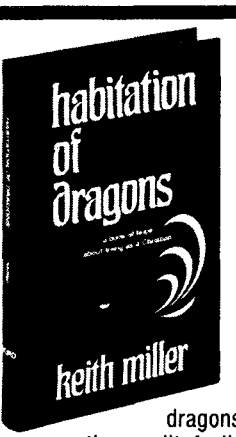


Ordinary Days with an Extraordinary God

Meditations of a Homemaker by Irene Harrell

Here is joy and beauty found in the commonplace. Here is celebration of life and a sensitivity which translates the everyday events of life into spiritual insight. ORDINARY DAYS WITH AN EXTRAORDINARY GOD has profound eternal truths and helpful insights for living found in such things as a ten-year-old's letter to grandma, a driver's test, a worn out dress, a family budget under seige . . . Here is everyone's everyday—50 adventures in the presence of God—with joy and discovery.

$3.95 Hardbound



habitation of dragons

a book to be lived with for 42 days a book that may stay with you forever

In Keith Miller's disarming honesty and openness, as he writes about encounters with personal dragons — loneliness, insecurity, frustration, guilt feelings, resentment, prejudice. You'll meet yourself. But more than this, you'll find a new quality of hope—born in real situations. Keith Miller calls his book, "footprints of a Christian wanderer on the inner journey,"—and invites you to join him as daily he describes a personal problem, offers a down-to-earth prayer about the situation, and applies to it the counsel of Scripture and the thoughts of outstanding writers. HABITATION OF DRAGONS will leave you with a feeling of hope and above all — not alone.

$4.95 Hardbound

available at your favorite bookstore **WORD books**

412

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED